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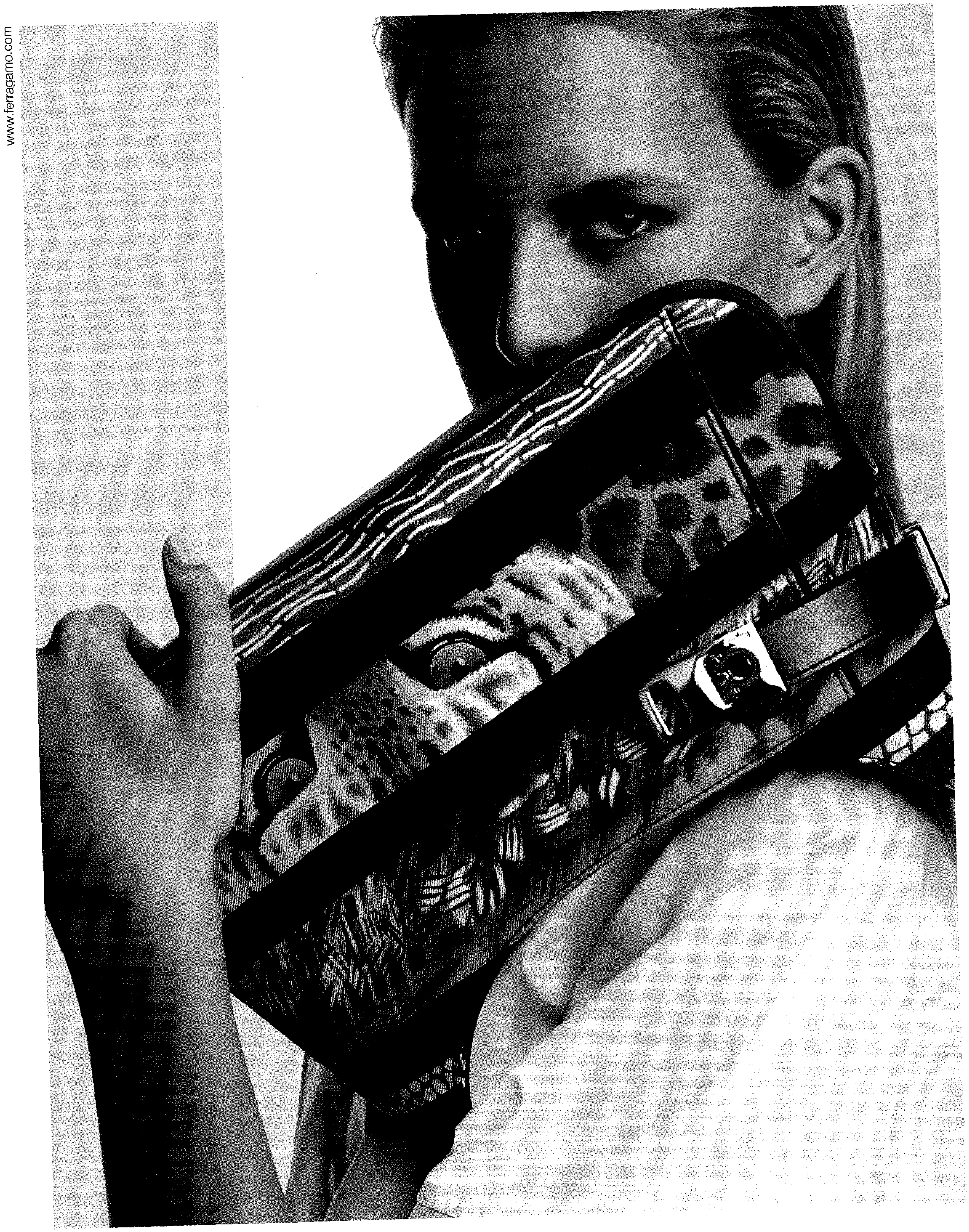
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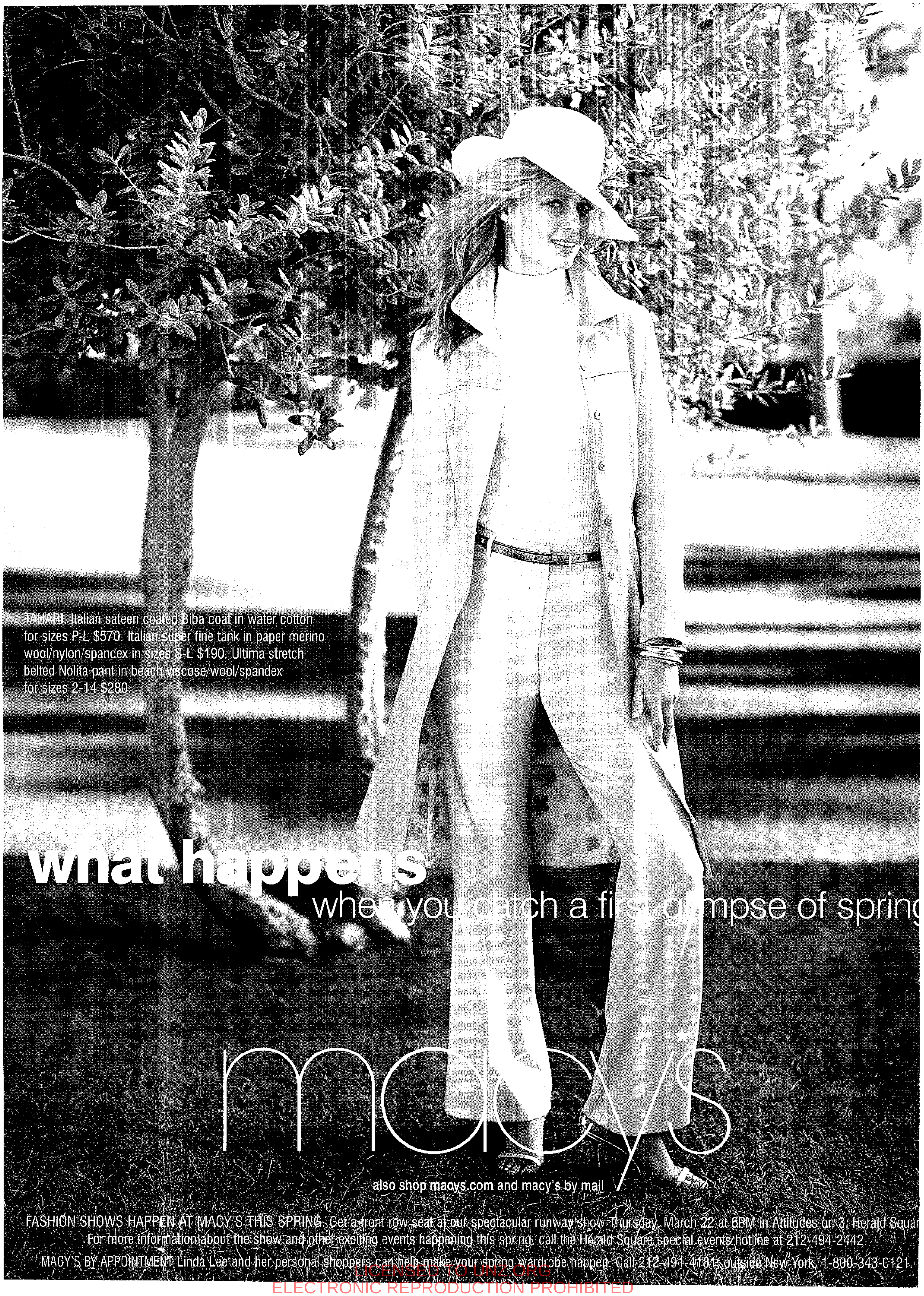
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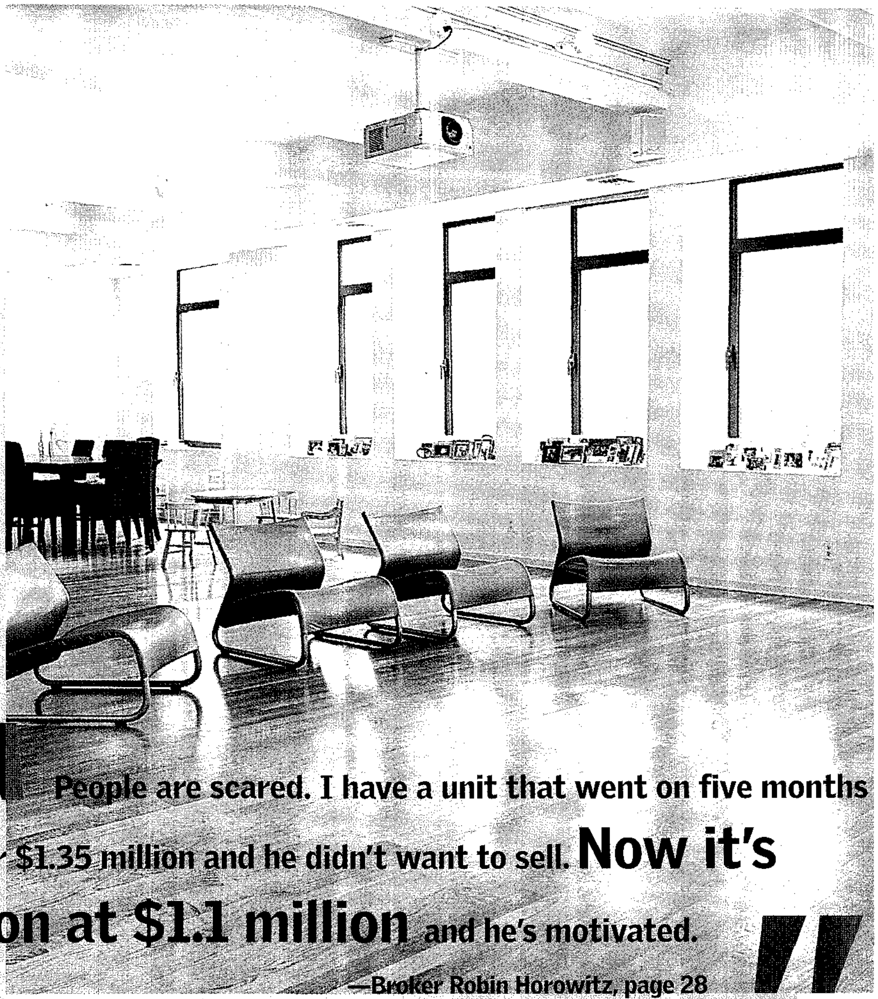

> "People are scared. I have a unit that went on five months ago for $1.35 million and he didn't want to sell. **Now it's on at $1.1 million** and he's motivated."
>
> —Broker Robin Horowitz, page 28

Real Estate 2001

28 **Picking Up the Pieces**
By Carl Swanson
The madness and frenzy of the last few years seem (cross your fingers) to be over. "It's a power shift," says one broker, from sellers to buyers. But the boom left absolutely nothing in the city unchanged.

31 **The Money Pits**
By Sarah Bernard
During the boom, buyers were willing to pay any price for the superluxury apartment of their dreams. But for some, the reality—poor construction, cracking finishes, and, yes, loud toilets—has been bitter indeed.

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After five years of runaway prices, restaurant saturation, and lightning-fast gentrification, what's next? A close look at what the boom has wrought in 26 neighborhoods from Harlem to Park Slope.

53 **A Modest Proposal**
By Sarah Bernard
Are New York's most affluent apartment hunters ready to fork over up to $5 million for an apartment on 105th Street, built on the ruins of a former cancer hospital? Developer Dan McLean thinks so—but then, he's from Chicago.

56 **A Death in the Family** By Lisa DePaulo
For Susan Berman—ex-*New York* Magazine writer and daughter of mob kingpin Davie Berman—life was a wild ride from Vegas princesshood to bare-bones survival in a run-down L.A. rental. Her friends, including real-estate scion Bobby Durst, got her through the dark times, but she'd pushed some to the emotional brink. Investigators wanted to question her about the long-ago disappearance of Durst's wife. Instead, she was found murdered on Christmas Eve, and the question remains: Whodunit?

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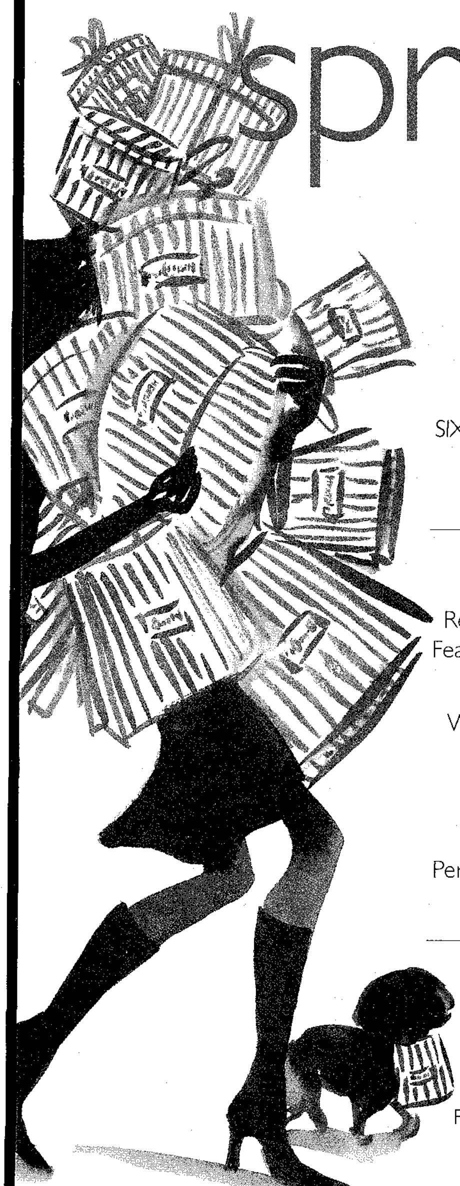

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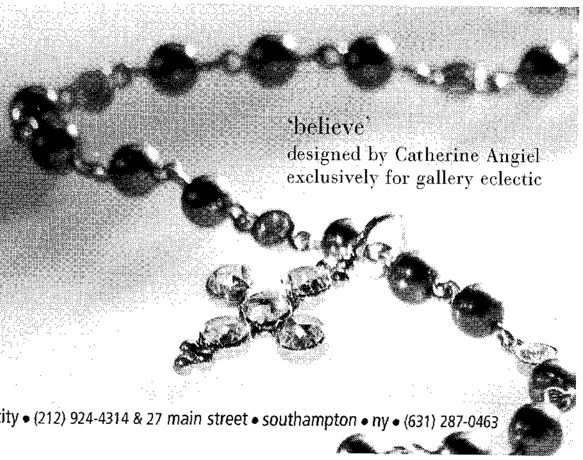

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He never picked up his socks. He thought I was his mother. He didn't make me laugh anymore.

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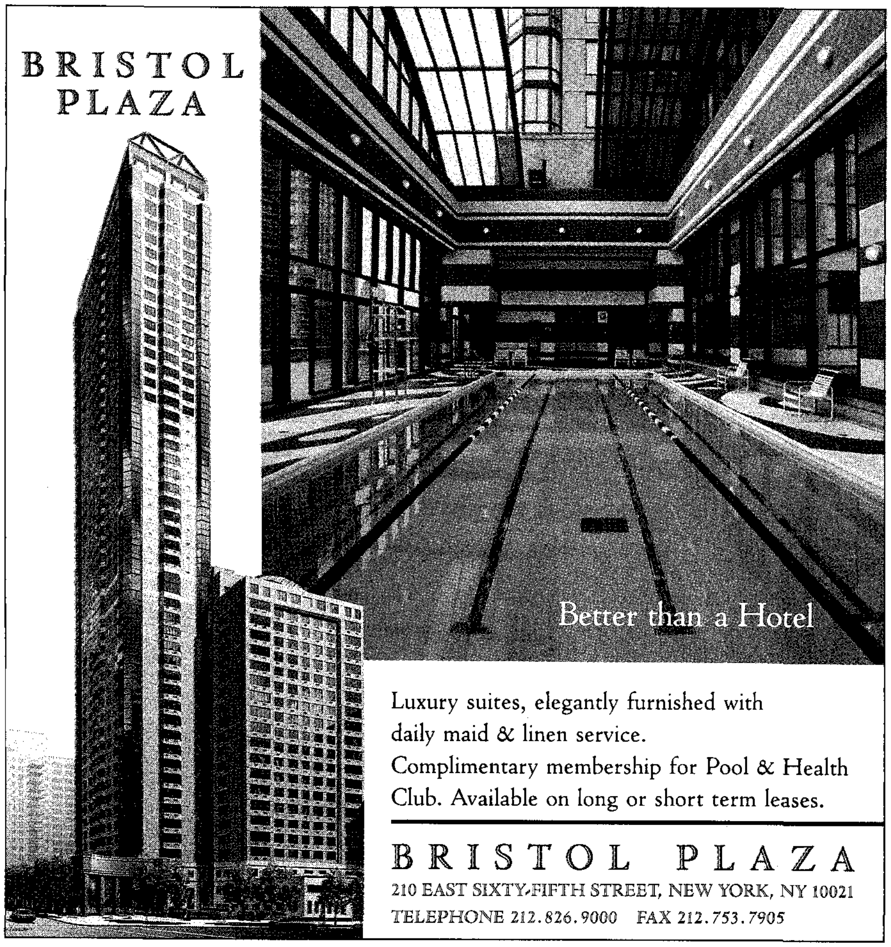

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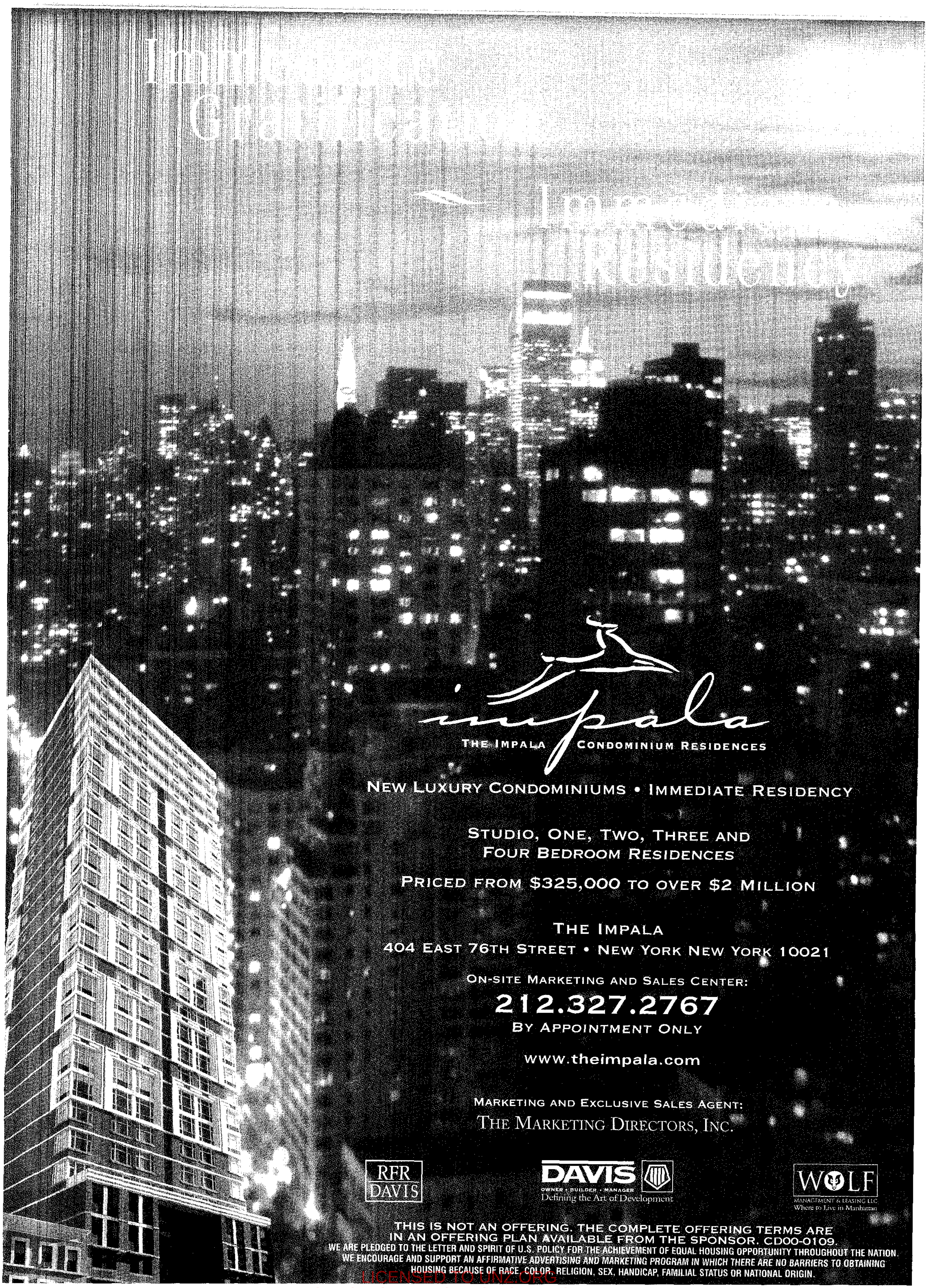

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Letters

> "Curry is the poster child for society's misguided lust for fame."
> —Carlo Trigiani

A Boies Life

Chris Smith's article "Boies Will Be Boies" [February 26] was a well-deserved tribute to a truly great lawyer. However, my recollections of the Supreme Court argument in which I defeated David Boies in *Pennzoil* v. *Texaco* were misleadingly juxtaposed with my thoughts on how regrettable it was that neither David nor any of the other justices pursued Justice Stephen Breyer's suggestion that Florida could correct the problems with its procedure and still continue counting votes lawfully until December 18. I have no criticism to make of how David argued that case. Nor would I compare his argument with the one I might have made—something I certainly can't pretend to know for sure.

Laurence H. Tribe, CAMBRIDGE, MA.

Contrary to popular mythology, my father, Thomas D. Barr, was IBM's lead attorney during the entirety of *U.S.* v. *IBM*. For a time, David Boies was one of over 100 lawyers on my father's team, but he left Cravath, Swaine & Moore for two years during the IBM case to work for Senator Ted Kennedy on unrelated business. If any one man's "brilliance" deserves the credit for beating back that suit, it's my father's.

Robert Barr, BRISTOL, VT.

Crafty Like Fox

Fox rules for reasons other than those Michael Wolff suggests, at least as far as I'm concerned ["This Media Life: The Party Line," February 26]. I am a disappointed Democrat and have been so sickened by the media's hiding and protecting of the Clinton administration that I refuse to watch CNN, MSNBC, or the "old" networks. I don't want to be coerced into my beliefs by people who party with the politicians they cover.

S. Narlesky, SAN JOSE, CA.

Michael Wolff's recent potshots at the hugely successful Fox News Channel climaxed with his pathetic conclusion, in his February 26 column, that Fox is a cheapskate, white-trash channel that only appeals to angry, ignorant backwater hicks. When will Manhattan's limousine-liberal elite stop accusing the masses of not knowing what's good for them?

Dave Kalstein, MANHATTAN

Spoiled Curry

It's unfortunate that Christian Curry has chosen to do so little with the opportunities he has been given ["Christian Curry's Naked Ambition," by Vanessa Grigoriadis, February 26]. Curry is the poster child for society's misguided lust for money and fame at any cost. I wish he would keep his shirt on—the stench is unbearable.

Carlo Trigiani, BROOKLYN

Baby Talk

John Simon's excoriating review of Edward Albee's *The Play About the Baby* was too gentle ["Theater: Albee Damned," February 12]. I don't remember ever being so abused by such prattle from a stage. It could only have been worse if the "Baby" had lines.

Marvin Warren, MANHATTAN

Correction: The article "In and Out" in last week's issue incorrectly stated that Rosie O'Donnell had been sued for "galimony." *New York* regrets the error.

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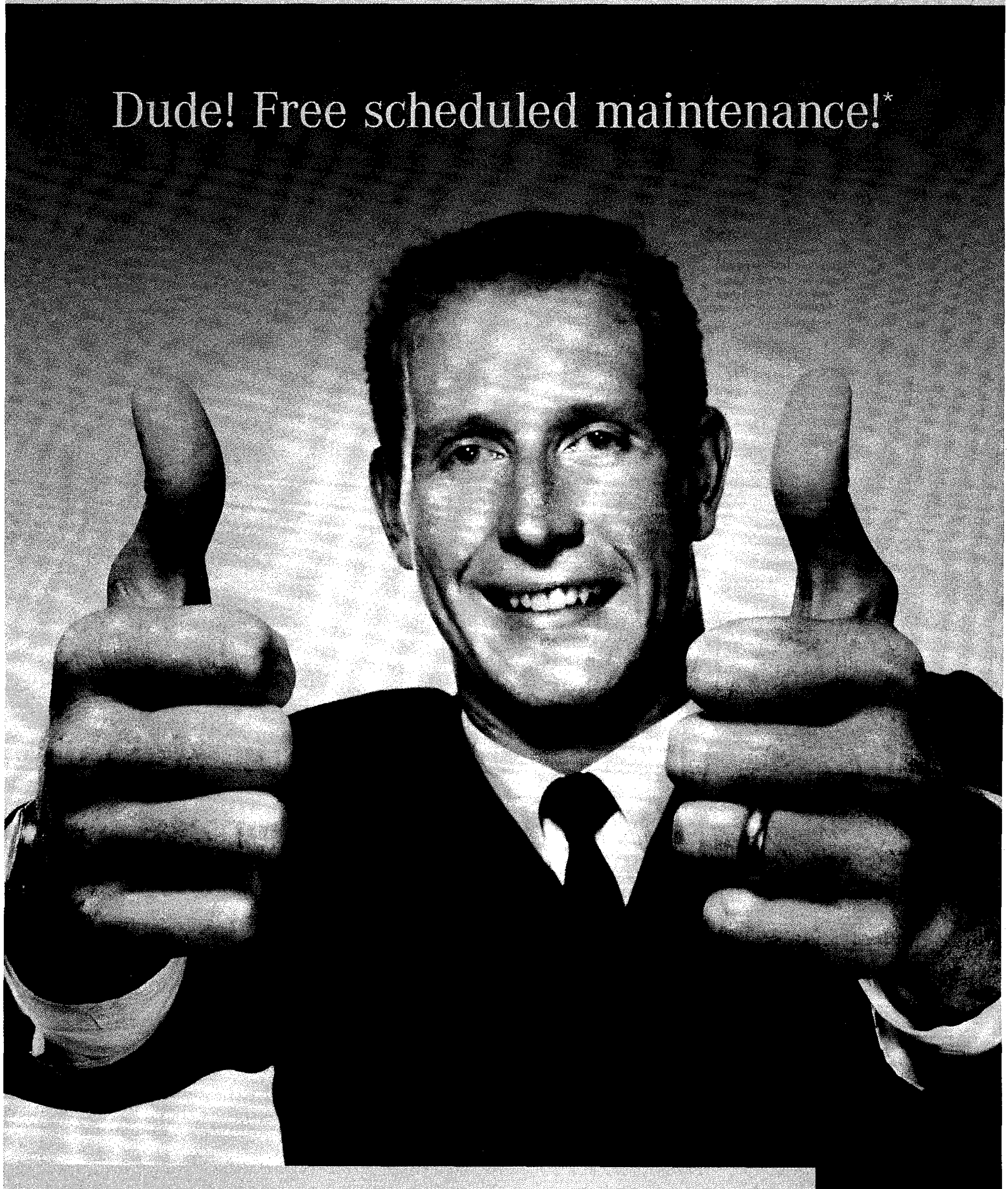
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Intelligencer

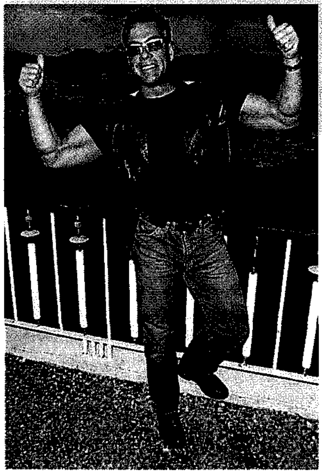
By Beth Landman Keil and Ian Spiegelman

One Bad Mama vs. the IRS

The IRS is going after its biggest real-estate target since **Leona Helmsley**. Four years after the death of real-estate magnate **Robert Koeppel**, widow **Roberta**'s battle with son **Bill** over the family assets has piqued the interest of Uncle Sam. We have obtained a notice of deficiency that the IRS sent to Roberta in January, asking her to kindly remit $21 million in unpaid gifts and estate taxes. And while the IRS wants her to cough up the dough, she may have some trouble liquidating her assets, because a judge's decision in *Koeppel* v. *Koeppel*—a case first reported here three years ago—is forcing mommy dearest to give junior his due. Not only is Bill getting the family's $3.5 million Westchester home, but he will also take over a $5 million condo in Palm Beach and a 37-foot sailboat named . . . *Gatsby*. How appropriate.

Van Damme Co-star Refuses Strip Search

Having starred in *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer,* **Michael Rooker** has been in some of the darkest scenes in pop-cinema history—but even he draws the line when asked to share the spotlight with a buck-naked **Jean-Claude Van Damme**. While shooting the sci-fi thriller *Replicant,* Rooker was called upon to give Van Damme's character a full strip search. After some consideration, however, Rooker decided it was for the best to go against the script and make the bulging Belgian keep his undies on. "It was great working with him," Rooker tells us, "but as far as a strip search goes, I was—and remain—unwilling to share the screen with Jean-Claude Van Damme Junior. There aren't many screens in the U.S. that can handle the magnitude of both Jean-Claude and his Junior." Let the nightmares begin.



Howard Stern Gets Roasted at Friar's

Old-time comic **Pat Cooper** (pictured) just can't stop talking about **Howard Stern**. We happened to be sitting near him at the Friar's Club luncheon last week as Cooper dissed the radio personality to fellow diners **Joy Behar**, **Patty Hearst**, and **Jerry Orbach**. Cooper boasted loudly of taking on Stern after a controversy in which the shock jock put a gag order on **Opie and Anthony**, a Howard-esque radio act that works for the same company as Stern, Infinity Broadcasting. "I said, 'Who are you to tell people what to say?' " Cooper fumed about the incident, in which Opie and Anthony were instructed not to utter Stern's name on-air. "How dare you?" The aged funnyman then attacked Opie and Anthony, saying, "When Infinity told them to back off, they turned into pussies." When Behar attempted to ask a question, Cooper yelped, "What is this, *Jeopardy?*" Behar explained, "We're just trying to *follow* you." A bit later, the funnyman's tablemates once again missed some point, forcing Cooper to ask, "Don't you read the fucking papers?" Finally, Cooper offered these words of wisdom to his luncheon crew: "I'm a man's man. I'm a man when I'm out with men. Now don't piss me off." Oh, but we must.

Jew: Not a Verb

When was the last time a dictionary made your skin crawl? The American Jewish Committee was recently alerted to an entry in the World Book dictionary: The definition for the word "jew," which, when lowercase and used as a verb, means, "(Slang.) to bargain with over-keenly; beat (down) in price (used in an unfriendly way)." The A.J.C. couldn't find a similar definition in any other lexicon and wrote to World Book to express its disappointment with the dictionary for not indicating that the word, when used in this manner, is offensive. The letter won a profuse apology agreeing with the assessment and thanking the A.J.C. World Book is omitting the entry from its database and searching for other potentially offensive definitions. So can we also expect Webster's to remove its lower-case definition of "welsh"?

Calvin Klein's Mystifying Moves

Calvin Klein received rave reviews for his most recent runway show, but immediately afterward much of the design team that worked on the Calvin Klein Collection seemed no longer to be employed by his company. After hearing whispers from fashion-world insiders, we confirmed with a source at Calvin Klein that the design team is "pretty much gone." While reps for Klein did not respond to requests for comment, rumors have also been swirling that the fashion house is preparing to move shop. Following a 1999 attempt to sell his business to **Tommy Hilfiger**, insiders are speculating that Klein may be on the verge of a deal with an Italian company, given recent reports that he's been looking at Milanese real estate, and that he's been in discussions with at least one Italian conglomerate, his current men's-license-holder, HdP. Time to say *arrivederci*?

Photographs: top, Steve Granitz/Retna; bottom, Robin Platzer/Twin Images.

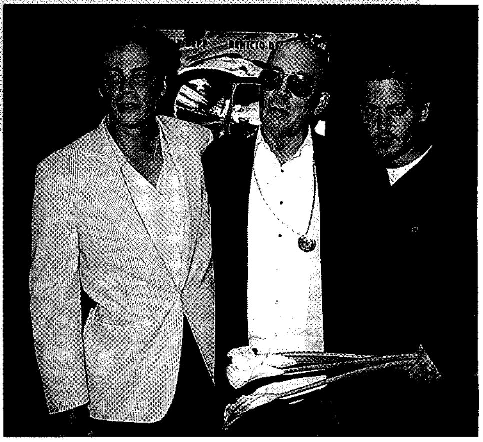
Intelligencer

Editing Themselves Out of *Gotham*

Checking the masthead on the debut issue of *Gotham* magazine isn't the best way to find out who's working there. After the first issue was completed, but before it hit newsstands, the mag's small staff saw some of its top dogs jump ship. The departed include executive editor **Guy Flatley**, design director **Francesca Richer**, and photo editor **Matthew Rosenzweig**. Why the hasty farewells? Flatley—*Gotham's* former number-two man, who brought in at least 25 pages of the first issue's editorial content, including a profile of **Faith Prince** by **Glenn Collins** and a humor piece by **Joe Queenan**—cites an exceptionally high chaos factor. "I don't think it's necessary to work until 3:30 in the morning every day," he says. But the final blow, Flatley adds, came while the staff began to plan the second issue. According to Flatley, he presented editor-in-chief **Joseph Steuer** with about a dozen ideas for marrying high-profile writers to articles, but almost two weeks later, Steuer still hadn't given them the once-over. "I told him it can't work that way," he says. "You can't call up **Frank McCourt** and say, 'Hey, can you give me a story about Irish playwrights by next week?' " Says Steuer: "It's a shame things did not work out. I wish them all the luck in the world."

Dr. Duke Strikes Again

When **Hunter S. Thompson** wants something, do it. Stars such as **Johnny Depp**, **Benicio Del Toro**, **Brad Pitt**, and **John Cusack** were treated to one of Thompson's classic rants when he faxed them copies of a fiery missive he was sending to the Shooting Gallery's **Holly Sorensen**. "I'm in a mood to chop your fucking hands off," he writes, displeased with the studio's progress in making the film version of his novel *The Rum Diaries*, which Depp is starring in and producing. "Nobody needs to hear any of that Gibberish about yr. New Mercedes & yr. Ski Trips & how Hopelessly Broke the Shooting Gallery is," the author states. A source close to the studio explains, "He's upset because she didn't return his call right away. But he calls her at home at three in the morning." We're also told that Thompson and Depp turned down bigger offers in order to secure the kind of artistic control the Shooting Gallery offered, but that now Thompson is miffed at how long it's taking to find the right screenwriter at the right price. "Ever since I broke off our torrid affair," Sorensen jokes, "Hunter's been resorting to adolescent tactics to get my attention." We're familiar with the style.



Sting's New Buzz

With all those kids, it was bound to happen. One of **Sting**'s sons, **Joe Sumner**, is following in his father's musical footsteps. The junior Sting, who we hear bears a striking resemblance to his father back in the Police days, took the stage at Mercury Lounge last week with the band Santa's Boyfriend. The London-based group just wrapped up a tour of small venues on both coasts—in fact, papa Sting graced the stage at a gig in L.A. According to a rep for Santa's Boyfriend, the band is now shopping for a record deal. Something tells us they won't be looking very long.

Hamptons Hoo-Ha

Is this Manhattan's version of prefab housing? Beginning this summer, *Über*-architect **Richard Meier** will be serving as creative adviser for 32 houses by 32 architects on 100 acres of land in Sagaponack. Meier will design one of the homes himself, with such hotshots as **Peter Eisenman**, **Michael Graves**, and **Steven Holl** drafting the rest. The Brown Companies is backing the project, which stands on sites ranging in size from one and a half to three acres. Sun-scorched funsters are expected to snatch up the 1,800- to 3,500-square-foot homes for between $700,000 and $2.2 million. Sorry, we left our checkbook in our other slacks.

O-Town's Liquid Dreams Come True

Nothing brings us joy like seeing warmth blossoming between a couple of rising pop treats. According to a source, the bubble gum was snapping when **Clive Davis**'s boy-band O-Town met **Sean "Puffy" Combs**'s girl-group Dream in Washington recently to watch the NBA All-Star game. The tipster tells us that O-Town's **Trevor Penick**, a rugged 21, and teeny-popper **Melissa Schuman**, a comely 16-year-old, were "making out" at a party. Dream's agent Kenny Burns insists that it never happened, adding, "I don't even think they like them that way." A rep for O-Town admits that the two groups had adjoining hotel rooms on the weekend in question, but insists that the boys and girls never hooked up. "O-Town would have hung out with Dream," says the rep, "if they could have gotten them away from their parents and chaperones." Wonder if **Britney Spears** will ever get **Justin Timberlake** away from *his* parents?

Additional reporting by Aric Chen and Paige Herman.

Photographs: top, Robin Platzer/Twin Images; bottom, Rick Mackler/Rangefinder/Globe Photos.

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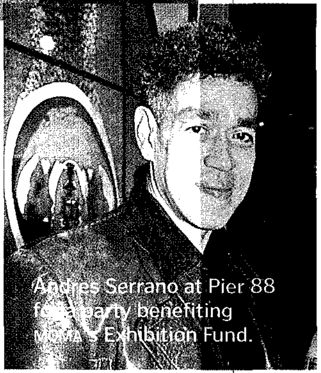
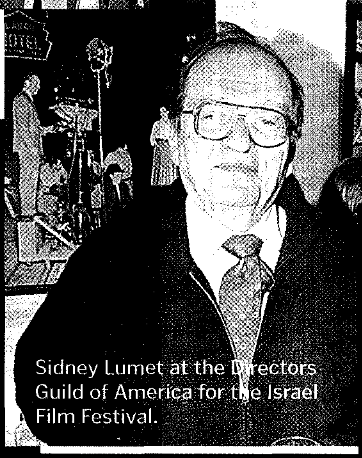
Scene

Will Barnet, Bill Cosby, and Elena Barnet at the Art Show benefit preview for the Henry Street Settlement.

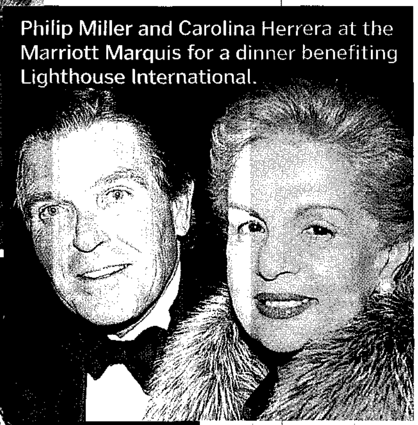
Erich Conrad, center, and the boys of "Beige" at B-Bar & Grill.



Andres Serrano at Pier 88 for a party benefiting MoMA's Exhibition Fund.



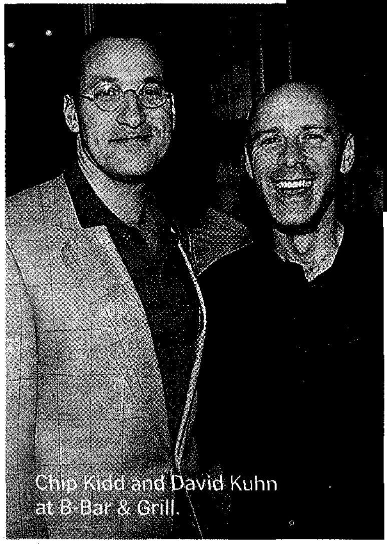
Sidney Lumet at the Directors Guild of America for the Israel Film Festival.



Philip Miller and Carolina Herrera at the Marriott Marquis for a dinner benefiting Lighthouse International.

Emmylou Harris at the Metropolitan Pavillion.

Chazz and Gianna Palminteri at Radio City Music Hall for the premiere of *The Sopranos'* third season.



Chip Kidd and David Kuhn at B-Bar & Grill.

Anne [illegible] Anna Wintour, and Ja[illegible]er at Moomba celebr[illegible] bat mitzvah of [illegible]xter-Jones.

'Beige' Rage

The city's gay glitterati (and their straight pals) came out February 27 to celebrate the publication of *New York's* "Gay Life Now" issue at "Beige," B-Bar & Grill's Tuesday-night love-in. In the back room, author **Michael Cunningham** and producers **David Binder** and **Joe Dolce** mingled with gay Boy Scout **James Dale** and real-estate magnate **Adam Rose** while **Monica Lewinsky** (presiding over a posse that included dragster **Justin "Kiki" Bond**) joked with actual woman **Victoria Leacock.** In the main room, **Mary McFadden** traded gossip with the *Post's* **Cindy Adams.** Also in the media contingent were *New York Times Magazine* editor **Adam Moss**, *Times* advertising columnist **Stuart Elliott,** and NY1's **Andrew Kirtzman.** Meanwhile, Channel 35's **Robin Byrd** groused about being left off the gay power list. "I've brought more gay men out of the closet than anyone," she giggled.

CHRISTOPHER TENNANT

Tibet in the House

Although they slipped into their box at Carnegie Hall a bit late, **Uma Thurman** and **Quentin Tarantino** wasted no time getting down to the sitarists at the thirteenth annual Tibet House Benefit Concert on February 26. The Pakistani musicians shared the stage with **Emmylou Harris, David Bowie, Moby, Natalie Merchant**, and **Philip Glass.** But when an overly psyched audience member tried to rush the stage during **Patti Smith's** rousing rendition of "People Have the Power," she realized that that wasn't always true, though the security guard did allow her a few whispers in guest vocalist **Dave Matthew's** ear before gently and compassionately showing her the door. At a dinner afterward at the Metropolitan Pavillion, it was Tarantino who was rushed, by a group of blushing monks who wanted to get their picture taken with the director.

AMY LAROCCA

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

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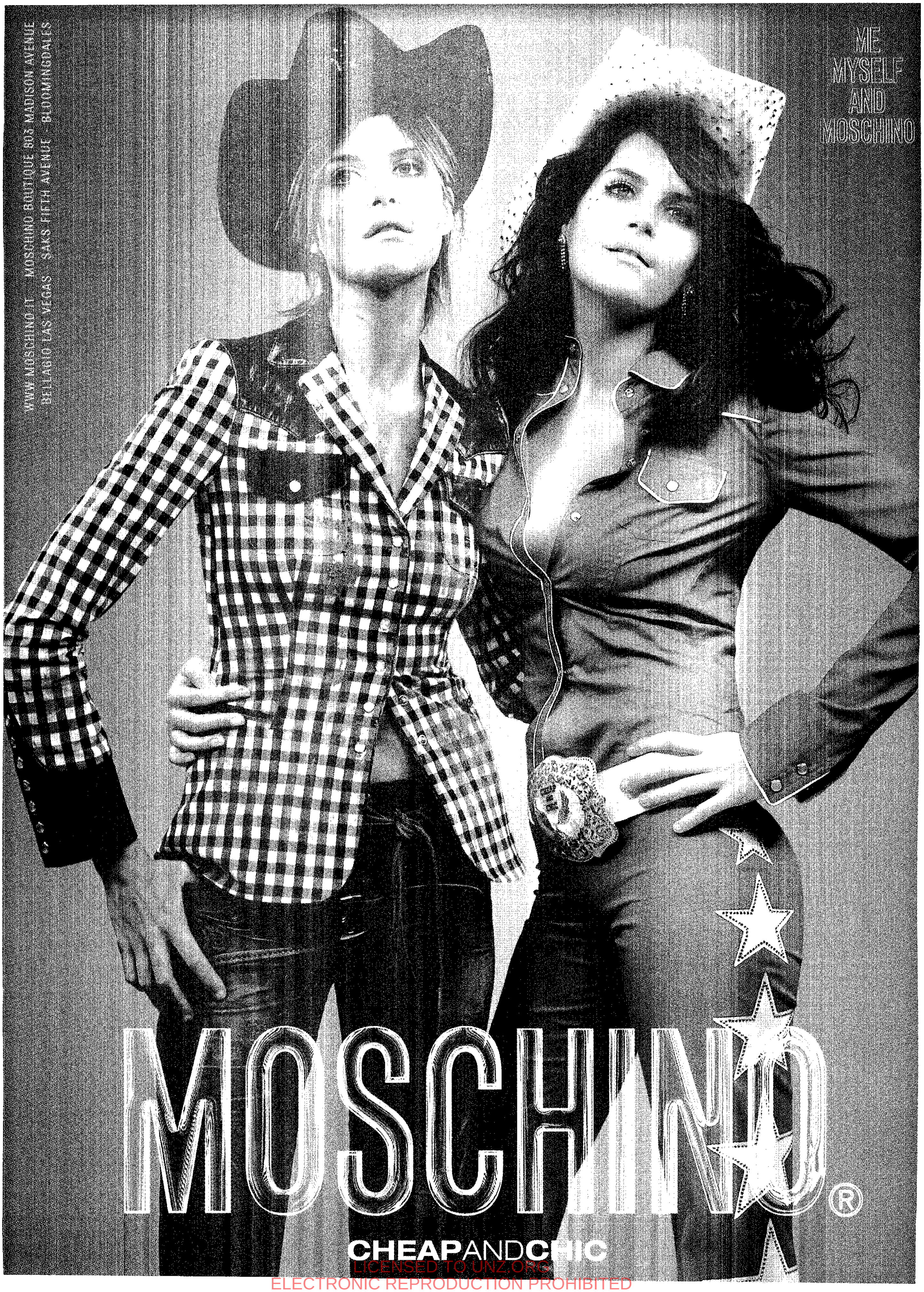
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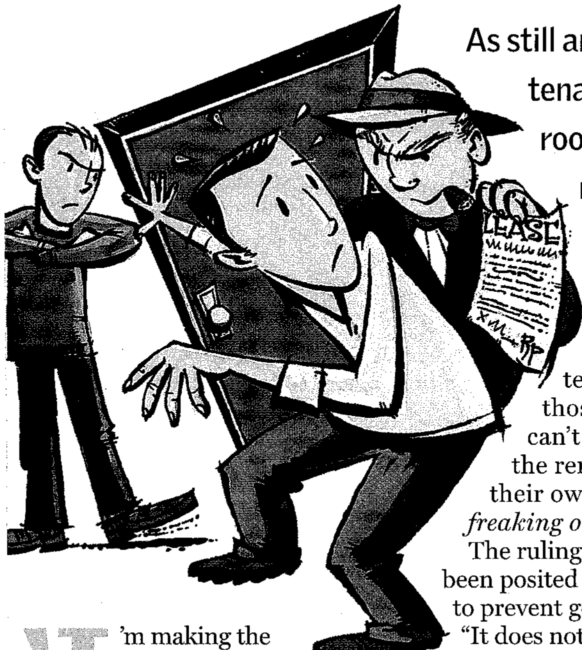
Nomads going from one rooming house to another, looking for a toilet that functions—Elizabeth Hardwick

GOTHAM

Edited by Andrew Lee and Carl Swanson

Out of Control



As still another rent regulation tightens, tenants—trapped between roommate and landlord—are running out of breathing room.

By Christopher Bonanos

“I'm making the calls in the other room! *Whispering!*” says F.*, a semi-retired graphic designer on the Upper West Side. She's afraid her roommate will overhear her talking about her rent. If he does, F.—who has lived in her two-bedroom for 25 years—could be priced out of her apartment.

It's a familiar New York situation: Someone with a rent-stabilized or -controlled apartment takes in a roommate, who pays more than his share but less than market rate. Both sides benefit; neither complains. But as of December, charging a roommate more than half the total is illegal, per the Department of Housing and Community Renewal, the state's rent-law agency. And many tenants—those who can't handle the rent on their own—are *freaking out*.

The ruling has been posited as a way to prevent gouging. “It does not discourage tenants from having roommates; it merely ensures that the rent charged them is fair, just, and equal,” says DHCR spokeswoman Debbie Del Pino. But landlord lobbyists pushed for its passage, says Sandy Russo, housing-law coordinator at Legal Services for New York City. “All the landlord literature that's crossed my desk says ‘It's a great day for landlords!’ ” —especially those who want their long-term tenants to give up and head for Boca. Some owners want to use the rule to evict anyone who's overcharging a roommate. “The supers and doormen are becoming snitches,” says F.

Among elderly tenants, the stories are heartbreaking. S., a 71-year-old, lives on the East Side under a SCRIE (a rent freeze for poor tenants). Her rent is $895; her income, $795. Her roommate is “delighted” to pay $600, as one observer put it. Under the new law, the roommate's rent drops to $448—and neither of them can stay.

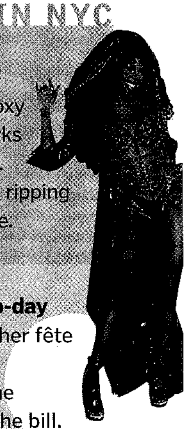
At New York Habitat, an agency that finds roommates and sublettors, vice-president François Roux says the panic is sinking in. “A lot of people have called us and said ‘I want to list my apartment, but only if I can rent it for what I was charging.’ ” When Roux breaks the news, “they tell us, ‘I'm in trouble. I don't know what I'm going to do.’ ”

What they'll do is leave. But housing advocates are digging in. “The DHCR didn't have the power to promulgate such rules. Only elected officials can,” fumes Russo. Besides, “what about alternative families? Are we going to have to prove that they're acting as a married couple? A landlord should have no right to be so invasive.”

**Some names and identifying details have been changed.*

G SPOTS

THIS WEEK IN NYC



Lil' Kim's big shoot-out: Her feud with Foxy Brown allegedly sparks gunfire in the Village. Looks like people are ripping off Puffy for a change.

Chelsea Clinton's b-day party: It's rumored her fête at the Hudson was comped—and no one knows who footed the bill. If her parents were there, the staff better count the silverware.

Cab crashing: A new study finds there are nearly 50 taxi accidents a day in NYC. Most are caused by Judge Judy's seat-belt announcement.

Bijou Phillips and Sean Lennon: The daughter of John Phillips and son of Yoko Ono make a love match—possibly based on their rich trove of “my parents are so weird” stories.

New York Boy Scouts: Local chapters come under fire for not abolishing ban on gays. Now, if only they'd offer that merit badge for voguing. . . .

The Park: A hyperhip new eatery on 17th Street and Tenth Avenue. It's close to Jersey—which makes it convenient for the only people who'll be eating there in eight months.

GUY NICOLUCCI

Photographs: top, Alec Michael/Globe Photos; bottom, Jim Wright/Corbis. Illustration by Robert Piersanti.

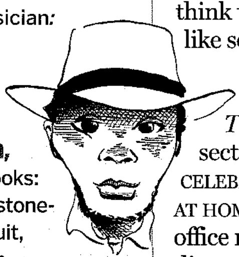
THE BIG QUESTION

What might Bill Clinton perform on Amateur Night at the Apollo?

Star Jones, co-host, *The View:* "He could sing 'I Can't Make You Love Me . . . If You Won't.' "

Steve Rifkind, founder and chairman, Loud Records: "I've seen Bill Clinton perform at a fundraiser—he's no amateur. I can see him getting into some old Sinatra classics, especially 'New York, New York' or 'My Way.' "

C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan borough president: " 'Take the "A" Train' by Billy Strayhorn, on the sax."



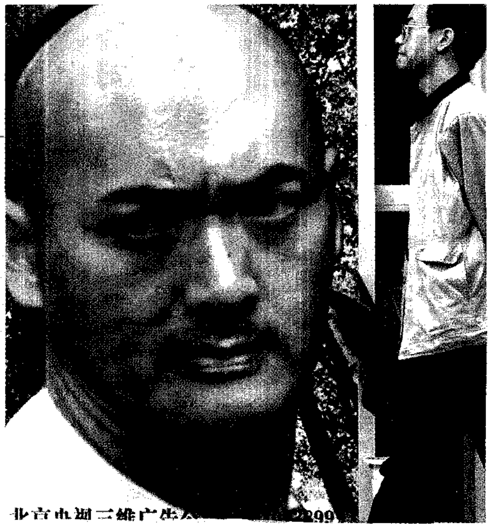
Mos Def, musician: "The songs of Johnny Cash."

Judith Regan, editor, ReganBooks: "He's in a rhinestone-studded Elvis suit, doing a rap with Eminem, his fatherless, motherless twin. The bedraggled castaway Clinton cat, Socks, appears, panhandling. Then all three lost little boys sing a rap rendition of 'Over the Rainbow.' "

Andy Richter, actor and former *Late Night* sidekick: "A spoken-word rendering of Jennifer Holliday's 'And I Am Telling You I'm Not Going.' It would bring down the freakin' house."

Oscar Wars

Save the *Tiger*



If it looks like an Oscar smear campaign and smells like an Oscar smear campaign, is it really an Oscar smear campaign? On January 29, the Los Angeles *Times* ran a page-one story titled 'CROUCHING TIGER' CAN'T HIDE FROM BAD REVIEWS IN CHINA. A week later, just as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,* Ang Lee's Best Picture–nominated Chinese kung-fu romance, was breaking *Life Is Beautiful's* record as the highest-grossing foreign film ever (and four days before Oscar nominations were announced), came *Variety's* page-one, above-the-banner story ASIA TO 'TIGER': KUNG-FOOEY, which cited poor Pacific Rim box-office numbers for the picture and accused it of "cultural bastardization." "If I see another one or two of these," said Reid Rosefelt, the publicist overseeing *Crouching Tiger's* national press, "I'm going to think there's a campaign. It's like someone made a call."

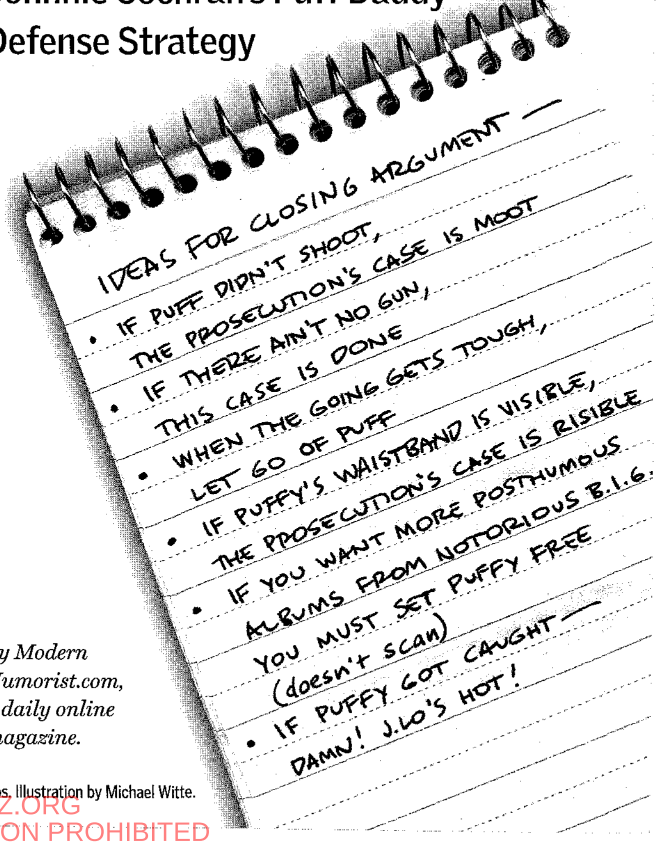
Which brings us to last week's New York *Times* page-one Arts-section salvo: LEE'S 'TIGER': CELEBRATED EVERYWHERE BUT AT HOME, with similar box-office numbers, this time disputed by the producers. Could this be sabotage? The usual suspect would be Miramax chief Harvey Weinstein—he of the aggressive Oscar campaigns for *Life Is Beautiful, Shakespeare in Love,* and, this year, *Chocolat.* But Miramax's nascent first-look deal with Good Machine, which produced *Crouching Tiger,* would seem to rule him out. Another suspect could be Terry Press of Dreamworks, whose screenings of *Gladiator* to hail its DVD release supposedly signaled a new tactic in Oscar-publicity-mongering. Press flatly denies any dirty pool, and *Variety* editor Peter Bart concurs: "That story originated from me. The trouble is, there's a tendency to rule *every* story below the belt."

Lee's co-screenwriter and co–executive producer, James Schamus, shot back with a response in *Variety,* calling the argument "chauvinism" and "fantasy"—noting that if the movie had been released in Asia alone, it still would have turned a profit. Weeks later, he remains baffled: "So now his ability to make movies in the West compromises our faith that he can make movies in the East? It's bizarre."

But Rosefelt isn't so sure about a smear campaign now. His new spin: The debate shows that Ang Lee is a truly international artist. "Correct me if I'm wrong," the publicist says, "but I don't think Ingmar Bergman was as successful in *his* home country—or Akira Kurosawa in Japan." Unfortunately, neither of them ever won a Best Picture Oscar. ROBERT KOLKER

Every Note You Take:

Johnnie Cochran's Puff Daddy Defense Strategy



IDEAS FOR CLOSING ARGUMENT —
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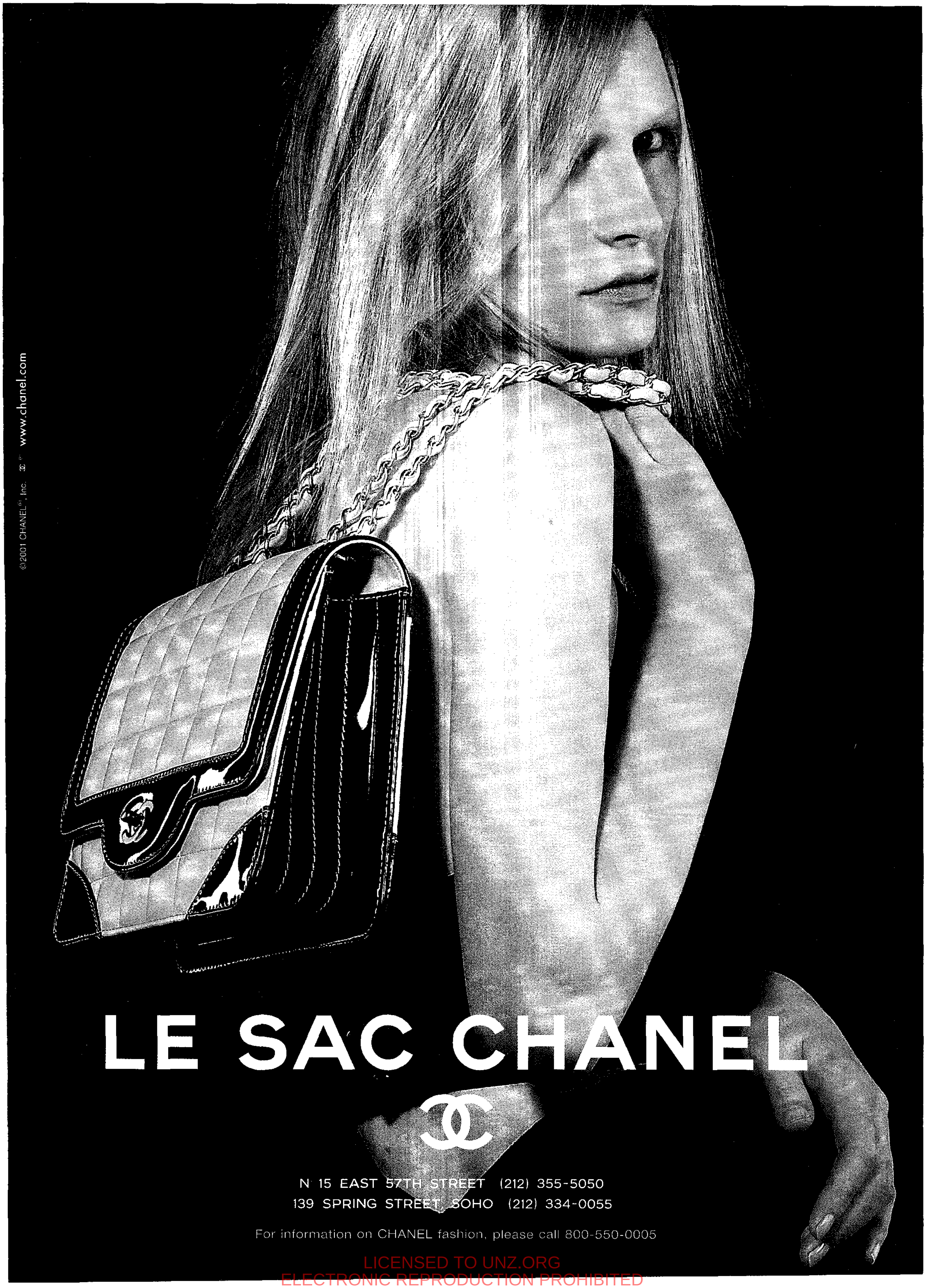
- IF THERE AIN'T NO GUN, THIS CASE IS DONE
- WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, LET GO OF PUFF
- IF PUFFY'S WAISTBAND IS VISIBLE, THE PROSECUTION'S CASE IS RISIBLE
- IF YOU WANT MORE POSTHUMOUS ALBUMS FROM NOTORIOUS B.I.G. YOU MUST SET PUFFY FREE (doesn't scan)
- IF PUFFY GOT CAUGHT — DAMN! J.LO'S HOT!

By Modern Humorist.com, a daily online magazine.

Photograph by AP/Wide World Photos. Illustration by Michael Witte.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Style

AMY LAROCCA

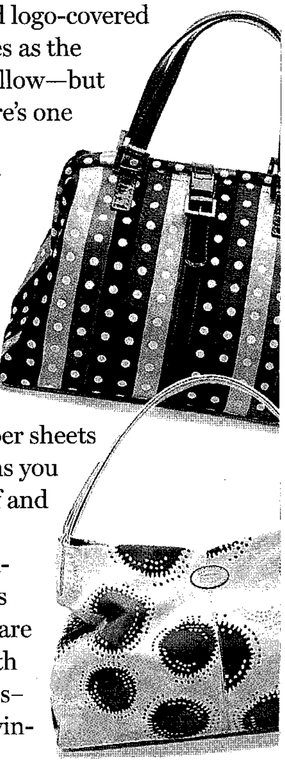
Neck and Neck

The most interesting thing about the way Alexander McQueen opened his London show last week was not the carnival atmosphere he had worked so hard to create. For true trend-seekers, the focal point was a khaki-colored vinyl tie, knotted loosely around the first model's neck and worn over a short-sleeved blouse. It's not that women in ties are new (see Annie Hall, Marlene Dietrich); it's more that they're *back*. Slim ties paired with something very feminine—like dangly earrings or brave, red lipstick—have been sighted on at least one buyer (Intermix), one editor (*Vogue*), and one stylist (*W*). Which means you want one, you just don't know it yet.

Striped Sass

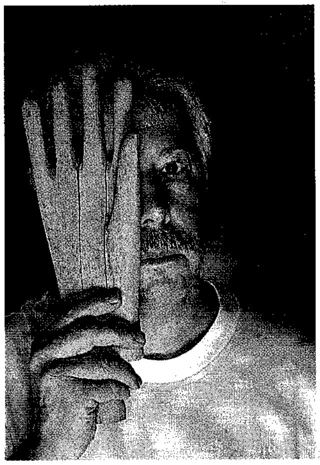
So much has been made, in recent seasons, of fashion girls and their chilly, naked feet. First, no stockings allowed. Then, only fishnets (which don't exactly *insulate*). The latest solution, spotted repeatedly front row at Bryant Park during the fall 2001 collections, is sexy, pointy stilettos (like these Manolo Blahniks) matched up with a pair of candy-striped anklets. The brand of choice is Antipast—which are Japanese and very, very cute ($24 at Barneys New York, 660 Madison Avenue). The effect, when paired with dirty, fraying denim or dark wool trousers, has a London-gal, thrift-store appeal that says, *I may suffer for these shoes, but I do have a sense of humor*. Of course, if pant lengths keep getting longer, our feet will be plenty warm anyway. We'll just be tripping more.

Seeing Spots



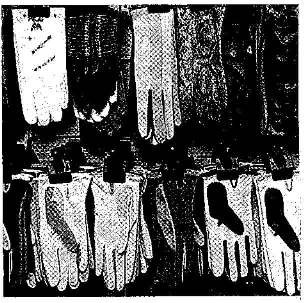
You spent the winter acquiring as many plaid and logo-covered purses and totes as the plastic would allow—but this spring there's one more unsubtle fabric vying for space on your shoulder: dots. At Kooba, carpenter bags seem to have taken their inspiration from those paper sheets of sugar buttons you used to peel off and eat ($350 at Bergdorf Goodman); J.P. Tod's suede satchels are punctuated with Baskin Robbins–pink and periwinkle blue spots ($1650, at J.P. Tod's, 650 Madison Avenue); even Kate Spade has sophisticated black-on-white spheres ($265 at Kate Spade, 454 Broome Street). Just one question: How long before this bubble bursts? SARAH BERNARD

Smart Set



Jay Ruckel

There is one designer every celebrity—from Mary J. to Jackie O.—has worn. His name is Jay Ruckel, and he works fourteen hours a day, cutting gloves above a souvenir shop in the shadow of the Empire State building. For the fall 2001 collections alone, he made gloves for 43 designers; this in addition to catering to the whims (*buckles! safety pins!*) of countless stylists, and whipping up dozens of pairs of white gloves for this year's debutantes. When Phillip Roth was writing *American Pastoral*, whose main character is a glove manufacturer, he came to Ruckel. "Sixty-six of my stories are in there!" Ruckel says proudly. Ruckel and his wife, LaCrasia Duchein, got into glove-making in 1973. Betsey Johnson was one of their first customers, and soon fashion houses the world over were calling. There is no glove, it seems, Ruckel can't make—his retail store (LaCrasia Gloves, 304 Fifth Avenue) carries everything from lacy eighties fingerless styles ($50) to smooth leather driving gloves ($100). But then, perhaps it is in his blood. "I have an uncle who studies genealogy," Ruckel says, "and he recently figured out that, in the sixteenth century, my ancestors were glove-makers!"



Photographs: clockwise from top, Liz Steger (2); Nick Ruechel (2); Photofest.

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James J. Cramer THE BOTTOM LINE

Oops, You Did It Again

Wasn't anybody listening? I warned that tech wasn't through breaking your heart, but you let its pumped-up, steroid-addled physique seduce you once more.

SHAME ON YOU! IN JANUARY, YOU JUMPED right back into tech. You couldn't say no. You couldn't resist. You had to have your Cisco fix. Your Corning drink. Your JDSU hit. You piled back into those aggressive growth funds hoping for a little more of that double-digit-gain elixir you'd gotten so used to. Instead, you're already *down* double digits and the first quarter isn't even through.

With the January tech rally now just one more colossal, brutal fake-out, we have to ask ourselves: How did it happen again? After the pasting people took last year, how did they jump right back into tech, only to get their heads handed to them one more time?

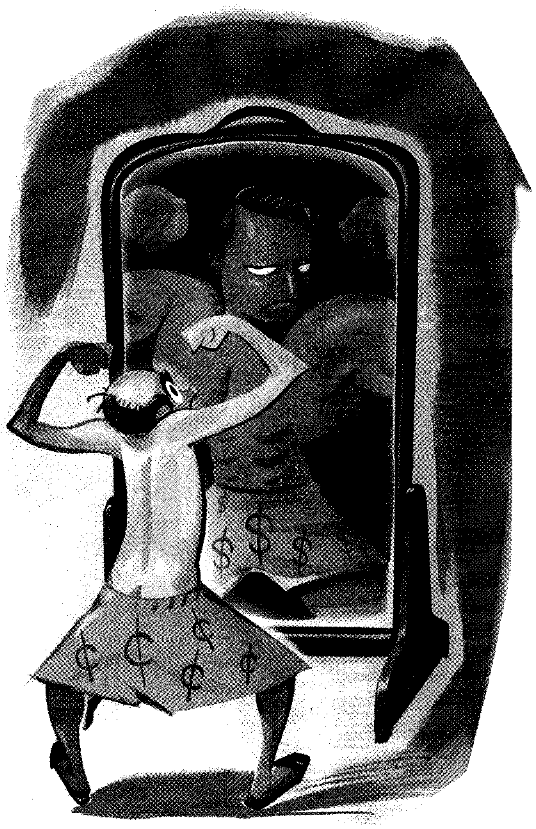
I think I know the answer. People can't stop thinking about those great gains of yesteryear. They can't accept the fact that the roaring market of the late nineties has vanished and isn't coming back. They're addicted. Even as dozens of stocks in other industry groups hit new highs daily, the public can't bear to leave tech. They would rather lose it all than come to grips with the need to diversify.

Despite the rolling collapse of stocks of hardware-manufacturers (think Gateway and Sun), semiconductor-makers (think Intel), networkers (think Cisco and Nortel), software companies (think Oracle), fiber optics firms (think Corning and JDSU), and, at long last, the storage outfits (Brocade, Emulex, and EMC), people keep thinking the worst is finally over. They keep trying to bottom-fish, betting that every decline is the last decline. They keep believing! And who can blame them? These stocks were like bodybuilders on too many steroids. Consider this confluence of incredible factors:

1. The stock market pumped billions into the dot-com movement, with tech getting far more than its fair share of the proceeds. That money all went to tech providers.

2. The rush by the bricks-and-mortar folks to build up Web infrastructure to prevent being Amazon'd created a massive second wave of spending for tech vendors that dwarfed that of the dot-coms.

3. Mutual-fund managers who marketed their funds as aggressive growers, like Kevin Landis from First Hand Funds and the folks at Janus, told us that prospects were so great that they could afford to pay virtually anything for stocks and they would still go higher. They took in money well beyond their capacity to handle it, then took on more on top of that!



4. Individual investors, turned on by e-mail alerts and chat rooms and the over-confident television talking heads, many of whom had a massive amount to gain from the tech-investing wave, never met a tech stock they didn't like. They poured money into individual tech issues. And when they ran out of money to buy, they borrowed record amounts of house money to buy more.

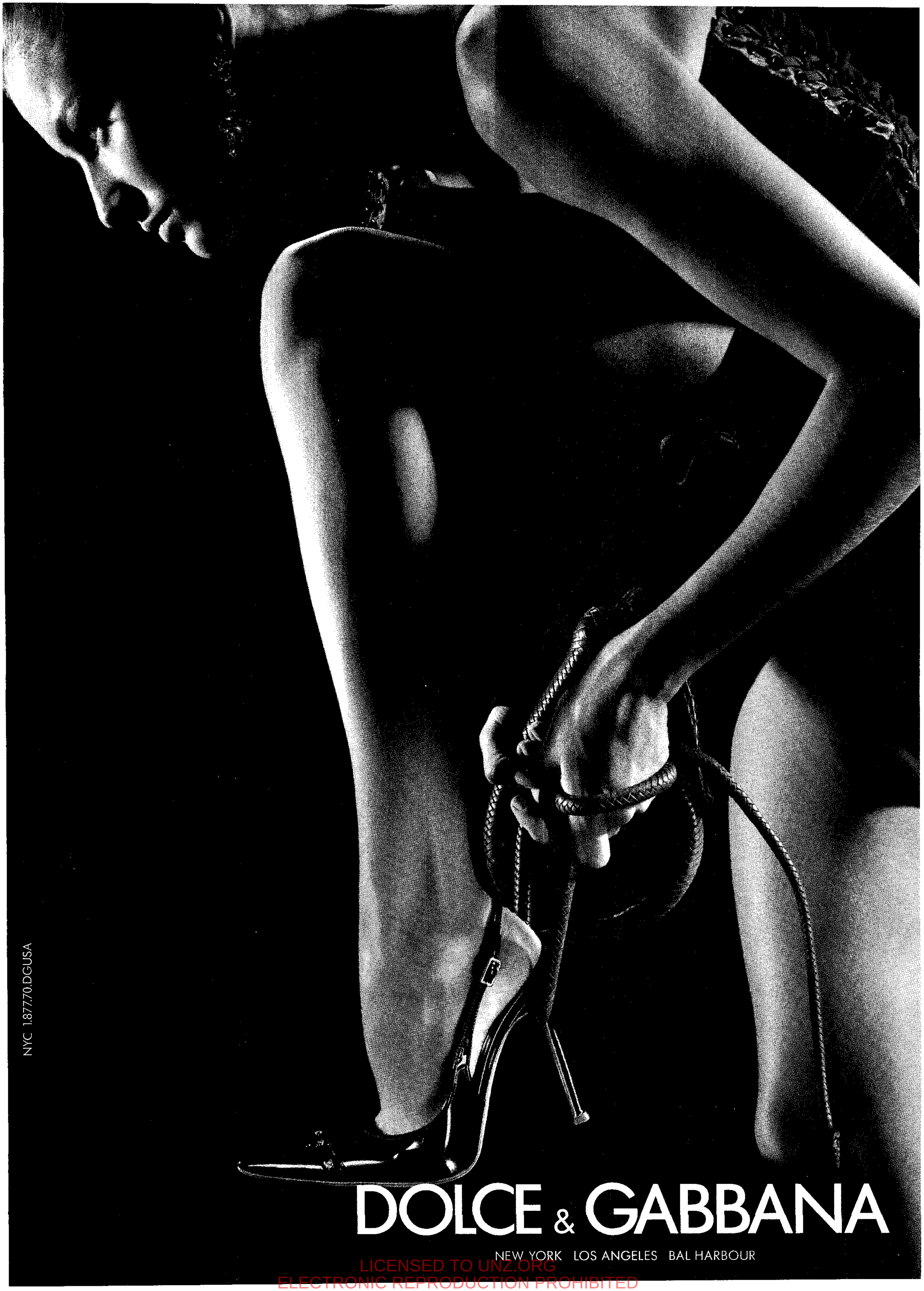
5. The companies themselves, flush with so much cash, all became venture capitalists throwing their own dollars into start-ups. They helped inflate the values beyond reason.

6. The venture capitalists, with deal after deal in the pipeline, and the brokerages, eager to manufacture product for their customers, created an unholy alliance of hot initial public offerings that stoked the process and ended any semblance of discipline.

NOW THESE BODYBUILDERS HAVE, ONE by one, turned to flab. The venture capitalists, that bunch of alchemists, keep talking about raising new money. You have to love their hubris; sure wish I'd had those kinds of stones when I was in the hedge-fund game. If they worked for charity, we wouldn't need social services—that's how good they are at raising new capital.

The bricks-and-mortar people who tossed millions into dot-com divisions have finally accepted that there will be no second Amazons. Of course, they didn't wise up in time to stop the bloodletting at their silly divisions that never went public and are now killing their parents' results. Now they just want the Web to go away quietly. "Keep those losses to under $50 million" must be the most common seven words spoken from offline execs to the online nuisances at Fortune 500 companies right now. Forget it,

Illustration by Eric Palma.



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offliners—you'll have to fire those guys. (We've just seen the results from corporate America on the various tech investments they made during the past five years: Write-down after write-down has been taken.)

But the true sinners are the mutual funds labeled "tech." Some of these folks have gone from up 15 percent to down 15 percent in a matter of weeks. The worst were the managers who said they were so close to Silicon Valley that they could see any coming train wrecks well in advance. They *still* come on television to play the "future is tech" game, but they're fast losing credibility.

And remember the individual investor? I don't. What a disappearing act that fellow pulled. In retrospect, though, don't judge the public too harshly. They saw hundreds of confident mutual-fund managers and brokerage analysts saying over and over again that the slowdown would never hit Corning and JDSU. PMC Sierra and Applied Microcircuits were supposed to be immune. Only nuclear war would take down Qlogic and Emulex. Without the promotion machine of television to pump up their assets—yes, that's why fund managers come on TV, not to enlighten us about great stocks—and without the red-hot records of the past, these embattled funds could turn out to be the same sources of selling pressure that we saw in the oils during the eighties, as every time the stocks lifted, the energy-based mutual funds had to do some selling.

By now, most people have given up the gains of 1999, let alone the beautiful wins of the first part of 2000. I think it is in the cards that the winnings of 1998 will get repealed this year before we see an end to the bloodletting. Of course, no one *thinks* he is a tech-oholic. You think you are betting on the future instead of mortgaging it. My advice: Take a look at your holdings. If the name of every company you own could be found by taking a chain saw to your personal computer and poking around inside, you are too invested in tech. It's *never* too late to kick the habit. ■

TheStreet.com

Check out TheStreet.com's "10 Questions" this week. Evan McCulloch, manager of the Franklin Global Health Care and Franklin Biotechnology Discovery funds, is on the hot seat. Available for free at www.thestreet.com.

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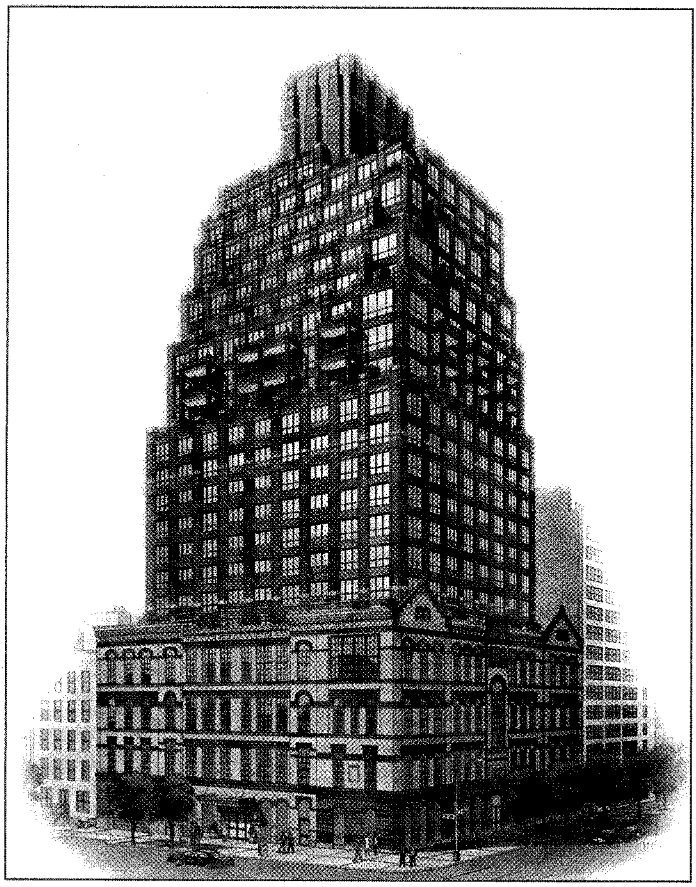

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Michael Tomasky THE CITY POLITIC

Dese Dems Don't Doze

Keep an eye on the Campaign for America's Future, a liberal policy group that's funneling anger over the election into agenda-setting Democratic strategies.

HERE'S THE ANSWER, WHICH I DISCOVERED last Wednesday at a conference in Washington:

More Jan Schakowskys.

The question, which occupied me as I shuttled down to attend the meeting organized by the Campaign for America's Future, is roughly this: What does the Democratic Party—out of the White House; a minority in the House; a functional minority in the Senate, what with Dick Cheney's ability to break tie votes; bereft, for the time being, of a focused response to Dubya's charm offensive; and, most of all, reeling over pardon madness—need right now?

The Campaign for America's Future is the country's leading liberal policy group, started in 1996 by Washington labor-movement veterans Bob Borosage and Roger Hickey as a counterweight to the better-known, centrist Democratic Leadership Council. I remember the group when it was just getting off the ground at that year's Democratic convention in Chicago, hosting panels in hotel ballrooms during lugubrious afternoons that most people spent trying to cadge an invite to the *George* party, which was the hot ticket at the time. By last week, the Campaign was able to draw hundreds of people from all over the country to the top floor of the National Press Club building, which made this, literally and figuratively, the major summit of liberalism at the dawn of the new Bush era.

Something quite out of balance seems to have happened in Washington since the election. The Democratic Party picked up five seats in the Senate, handsomely exceeding anyone's expectations. It held its ground in the House. It ended up winning most of the close elections (Maria Cantwell in Washington, Debbie Stabenow in Michigan, the deceased governor of Missouri) and defeating some candidates in whom the GOP and the National Rifle Association had invested heavily (John Ashcroft and impeachment manager Bill McCollum in Florida).

That's not bad at all. But then came the Supreme Court. Then came Dubya, whom the Washington media have decided to get behind. And then came Marc Rich. Suddenly, Democrats looked wiped out. They acquired a smell of defeat about them that was entirely out of proportion to what actually happened in the election. And now they're on the defensive. They have no fight in them. Or do they?

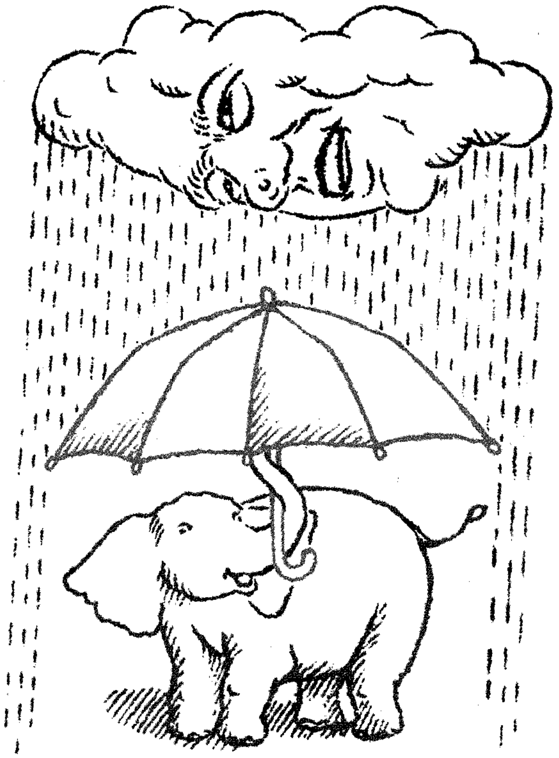

Illustration by Marcel Durocher.

"I think there are some people who are raising heck on the floor of the Senate and in the caucuses," Paul Wellstone told me. "It's a little hard for people to break through the media right now. But, and I really do mean this, I think there's going to be a fair amount of drawing of lines, mostly on the tax cuts."

"Yes," said pollster Stan Greenberg, when I asked him if it was true that Democrats hadn't been putting up much of a fight so far. "Though I think it's changing. We won't be in the same place 30 days from now. Activists are having a big impact on party leaders."

Indeed, whether "they" have fight in them depends crucially on which "they" we're talking about. The activists, it was apparent last Wednesday, are full of energy. There are lots of people doing lots of good things that aren't making the papers. Amy Dean, the head of the South Bay Labor Council in Silicon Valley, where she organizes lower-level workers, exemplified the anger that many rank-and-file Democrats still feel about Florida—"we remember Selma," she said in her talk, invoking a revered civil-rights slogan, "and we remember Florida, and in oh-two and oh-four, you will be overcome."

But that robust anger doesn't have much voice on Capitol Hill. "The base of the Democratic Party," Wellstone acknowledged, "is showing lots more indignation right now. The question for us is how, in the legislative process, that plays out, which remains to be seen." At least he's trying, anyway; he gave his speech and then dashed off to mount the opposition to a bankruptcy bill Trent Lott was trying to push through, at the behest of the banking and financial-services lobbies, that consumer groups are against. But that's just one below-the-radar piece of legislation. It doesn't amount to a message.

WHICH BRINGS US BACK TO WHERE WE started. Who's Jan Schakowsky?

She represents the 9th congressional district of Illinois, the north side of Chicago and Evanston. She won office only in 1998, taking a seat that had been occupied by one man for most of the previous 50 years, so it's far too early to say that she's made her mark in Washington. And her district is about as safely liberal as Jerry Nadler's or Maxine Waters's, which means that the national press can easily marginalize her.

But she's got something. First, that midwestern sturdiness, kind of like Hillary in her better moments. But unlike Hillary, she's emotive; a whippersnapper. She's funny ("I find the president's charm offensive offensive," she said, in a faint echo of fellow Illinoisan Adlai Stevenson's imperishable observation that he found Paul appealing and Peale appalling). She has moxie. She epitomizes the kind of joyful spirit Democrats need right now. She described a recent appearance she made on *Politically Incorrect*, in which she insisted that Al Gore won the election and received a thunderous ovation from the audience (in the interest of full disclosure, she did note that the approving audience was at Howard University). She read some of the hundreds of E-mails she'd received from people around the country thanking her, expressing admiration, which she took in stride, for her "gonads" and "balls."

Most of all, she's got the right idea—the Washington arm of the party needs to stay in touch with the outlanders, soak up some of their energy: "My message to my colleagues is, 'Get out of town!' We have to inspire people, get in touch with the rage that's out there, and build confidence in what we're doing."

The Democratic energy isn't on Capitol Hill. To any great degree, it isn't here in New York, either—we're jaded, and carpet-bombed with bad Clinton news every day. It's in the rest of the country, where millions of people are still quietly pissed off but have few places to turn. (One notable and indispensible exception: the Website democrats.com. Not the official party site, but the work of two men named David Lytel and Bob Fertik. Check it out.) It's nice to see a legislator who gets this.

As I said: More Jan Schakowskys. ■

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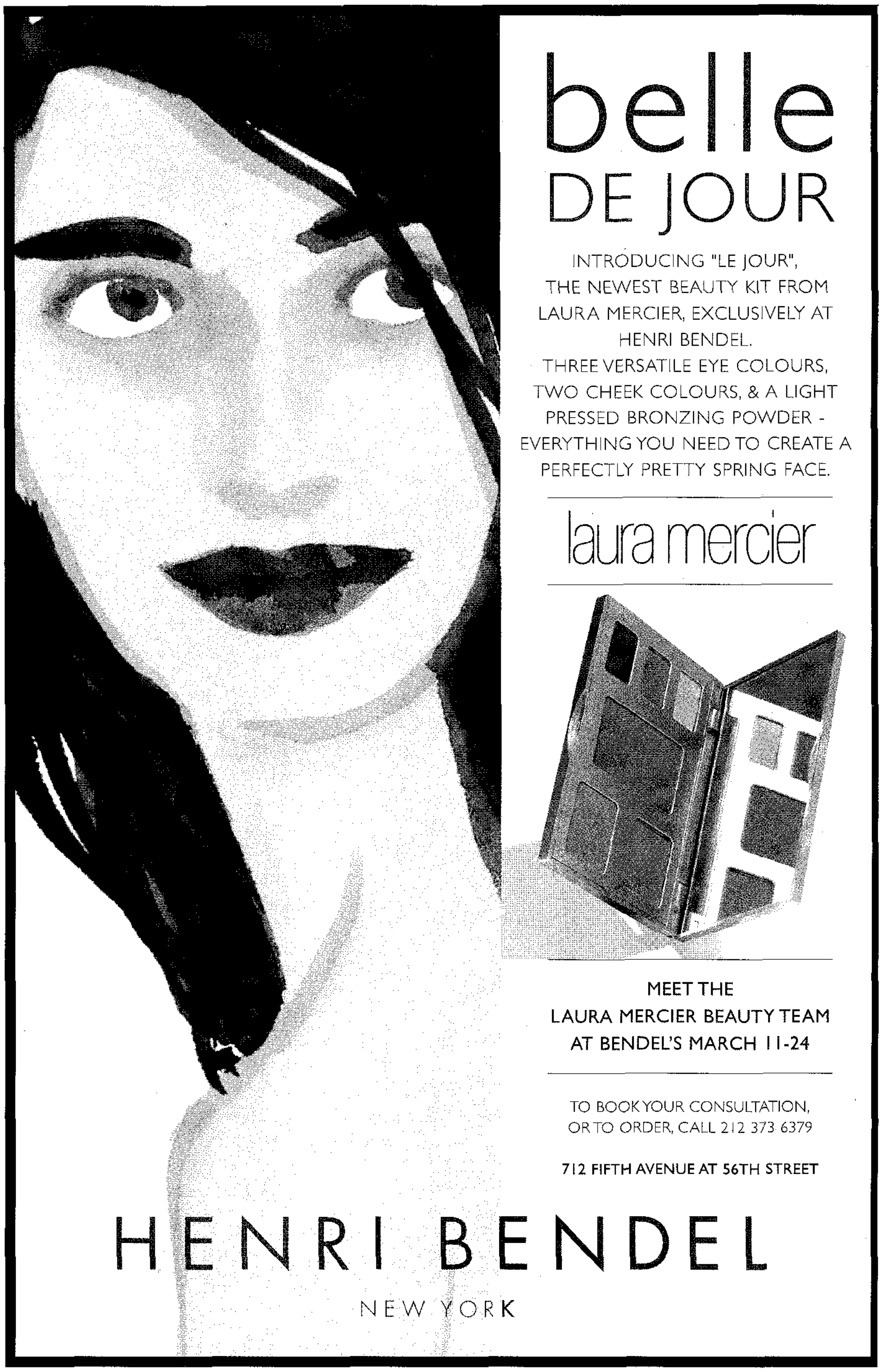
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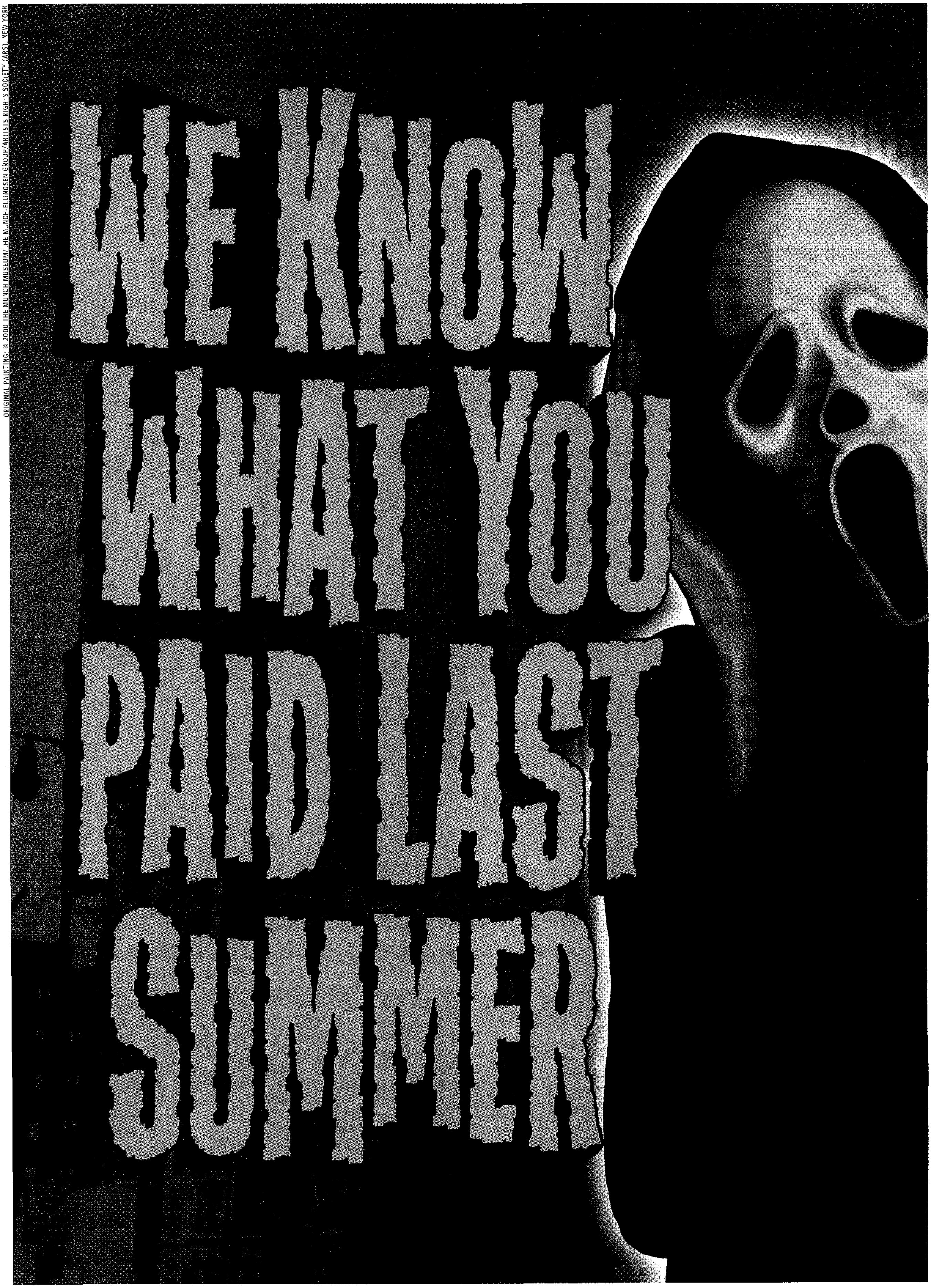

WE KNOW WHAT YOU PAID LAST SUMMER

ILLUSTRATION BY TIM GABOR

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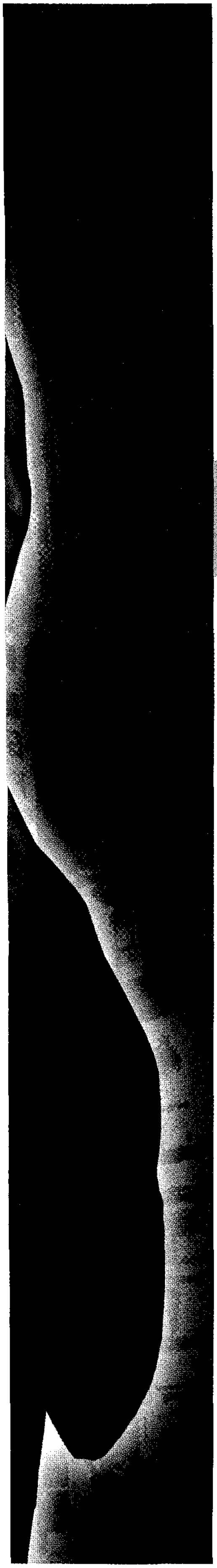


The boom is over, having created new neighborhoods, new fortunes, a whole new city. So what are the new rules of real estate? Ask your broker. Then ask yourself if you believe her.

By Carl Swanson

THE APARTMENT IS IN THE TENEMENT ON St. Marks Place where punk pioneer Legs McNeil shelters his pallid limbs. It's the kind of building that, in the last few years, has become home to the new East Villager—symbolic analysts in their twenties with a not-too-risky hipness.

But maybe the punks will have their revenge on the salarymen yet. When a potential buyer and her broker walked into the $300,000 one-bedroom last month, they found the guy who was living there sitting in his home office in the dark, his shades pulled down. He was wearing a dot-com T-shirt and surrounded by derelict computers. "He was drinking wine in the dark at like two in the afternoon," says the alarmed apartment-hunter.

In the last few years of the Clinton economic good times, the city has changed profoundly. But now that boom seems to be self-immolating with the same sudden furiousness as the ex-president's reputation. (Were they made of the same frothy stuff?)

Big nylon ads for out-of-business tech companies are still stretched across the sides of buildings. Entire demographics seem to be out of work. The NASDAQ just isn't cooperating. Since the fall, New York's lost some of its feeling of go-go inevitability.

So what's going to happen to that most onerous, and obsessed-over, index of our financial status and self-worth, real estate?

It's certainly not where it was this time a year ago. Brokers seem to agree that prices have retreated around 8 percent, though others say the real change is just that there is more negotiating room. Certainly, things have slowed down a lot.

"There's a transfer of power going on," spins Corcoran COO's Scott Durkin. "The buyers are taking the lead."

Brokers want it both ways: The market's not crashing, but maybe you can find what you want now.

"Yes, there will be a slight cor-rect-tion," enunciates Amy Tucker Meltzer of Sloane Square Realty. "I'm personally, as a broker, looking forward to this market."

BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OLD MARKET? Brokers, who chaperoned this wild party and spiked the punch, are already feeling nostalgic—and a bit hung-over. "It was this incredible, euphoric time," says Douglas Elliman's Dolly Lenz, one of the most successful and effective brokers of the boom. "I'd been through it before, at the end of the eighties, but this was stronger. Everybody had to have what their friends had. People said, I have two apartments, can you get me the others on the floor? I'd literally make money picking up the phone."

REAL ESTATE 2001

"The real-estate market in its boom was completely inflated," says another broker—sounding smug after socking away hundreds of thousands of dollars in commissions over the last few years.

The bubble machine always seemed to be churning away at realty-megabrand Barbara Corcoran's cheerful, clearly expensive office atop Barneys at 660 Madison. She's reminiscing: "There were no questions asked during the last five years," she says from the head of a table, surrounded by blond wood and happy, framed art. "Only recently are people asking what the maintenance is."

And even the master marketer herself is surprised at how the city has been reimagined in order to sell real estate. "How did second and third floors become 'townhouse floors?' " she asks. "How did Carnegie Hill come to be so far from Harlem?" (She dropped $3.5 million for a co-op there herself last year.)

The city's been in the thrall of this boosterishness, and the effect has been the steady transformation of where we're willing to live and how much we're willing to pay to live there. With crime down and the economy up, the Boom-*Über-Alles* was rolling: $18 million for a co-op at 820 Fifth Avenue; $9 million for a condo in TriBeCa; $1 million for a townhouse just blocks from the projects in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn. And if you couldn't afford anything close to that? Well, then to Astoria with you, or Bushwick or Inwood or Kensington. Or somewhere at the other end of a commute. Just as the city expanded steadily in the nineteenth century from its original settlements across a speculator's grid of empty lots drawn over the farmland, the last five years have seen a new matrix of hype and bargain-hunting feverishness as people tried to stake their claim before the wave overcame them.

"NOBODY WANTS TO BE THE LAST PERSON TO BUY BEFORE THE BUST," SAYS A BROKER.

In the process, New York intensified—Manhattan values seem to have permeated every neighborhood and made them all somehow the same. "They all erode, one into another, anchored by a Gap and Starbucks," says Halstead Property Company's Robin Horowitz. "The Village used to be heavily defined by one thing, and now . . . "

And the brokerages expanded to sell off this homogenized product. Corcoran almost tripled in size in five years, and Douglas Elliman and Brown Harris Stevens became huge, too, subsuming rival firms and adding offices everywhere.

Now they're all in the same big boat, watching the eerily calm seas for signs of danger. "Here's one, 285 Lafayette, 4E," says another broker, trolling his computer for discounted lofts in late February. "It came on at $3.9 in January, and it's down to $3.48. Everyone's fishin'. "

BROKERS AGREE THERE WAS A stomach-churning dip in activity at the end of last year but that things picked up again by February. But something's not quite right. "I have people who are scared," admits Horowitz. "I have a unit that went on five months ago for $1.35 million and he didn't want to sell. And now it's on at $1.2 million and he's motivated."

Last year, owning real estate was like being Emma: You got to choose your suitor deliberately, often with sealed bids, and then, sometimes, just change your mind before the deal was done.

Now sellers are like Carrie Bradshaw, angling for an advantage, the clock ticking. "You can negotiate to a greater degree now than six months ago or even four months ago," says townhouse broker Leslie Garfield, who's been doing this for 40 years. "Sellers are more determined; they're just letting go."

"We don't see bidding wars," says Benjamin James Realty director James Ferrari. "Banks are under pressure" not to overlend. Bonuses were bigger than ever this year, too, but Barbara Corcoran says that "they all thought that this is the last one. So they're not spending it."

"I'VE STOPPED COACHING PEOPLE ON BIDding wars," says Corcoran's Wendy Sarasohn. "Giving them the speech that they've got to be willing to pay full asking." And people *are* waiting. "I have a partner in a major investment bank who's worth, I'd say, $500 million," says Lenz. "He's been looking at the same apartment for two and a half months. We keep coming back with the decorator. The last time he bought, six years ago, he came in and offered full-ask. He just did it, boom. It's not a money issue, it's the issue of not being a fool."

Which could be the real issue on both sides: "People who bought in the East Village two years ago, business people who you don't know why they moved there in the first place, they seem urgent," says Alissa Quart, a writer who's been in the market. "But there's this chauvinism. They don't want to sell it for less than they bought it for."

There's also a sense of missed opportunity. The Lycée Français, for instance, recently discounted prices on its "collection" of six Upper East Side robber-baron mansions almost 20 percent—to $87 million.

"This market doesn't want to do renovations," explains Kirk Henckels, director of Stribling Private Brokerage. People want to know what they're getting upfront. Nobody wants to take the risk, or suffer from the delayed gratification. Handyman's specials aren't selling anyway, much less a restoration project like the Lycée: "Ooh, that's not for the faint of heart," he says.

Besides, the Lycée "wanted people to pay cash and close now; then the school would pay no rent for two years" while it built its new campus, says a broker. "It isn't that market anymore. No matter how much things sold for last year."

BROKERS HAVE NO PROBLEM ADMITTING that things have slowed a bit—off-the-record. "If there's any market that might crumble, it's TriBeCa," says one broker with twenty years' experience. "Because SoHo dipped the most last time."

"I have to go do some work," says another. He had a fantastic year in 2000, but, he says, "I'm not going to have any to do come April. I think starting in May it's going to be rough, with a lot of layoffs. Psychologically, it's going to be a mess."

But most manage to stay on message, and the message is: Look at the long-term. "I say, Is there any reason to sell in three to five years?" says Fox Residential president Barbara Fox. "And they say, No, we're going to stay until our kids grow up. In that case, no, you have no problems."

In the meantime, they don't want anyone to spook the market. "Historically, the press drove the market," says Sarasohn. "If the press says the market's going down, then nobody wants to be the last person to buy before the bust."

So when the *Times* ran an A-1 story on January 16 that said that Manhattan rents were starting to drop, "that translated into people coming into my office and saying, I want a doorman studio for $1,600," says a brokerage head. "And you can't. Maybe in Astoria."

Which sounds pretty much like business as usual. ■

LUXURY LEMONS?

The brochures and CD-ROMs promised old-world splendor and high-tech ease. But the buyers of some of the boom's most visible developments say: Promises made weren't promises kept. By Sarah Bernard

T

IN A SPACIOUS, TASTEFULLY APPOINTED LIVING room at 145 East 76th Street, a couple who've spent most of their adult lives on the Upper East Side are reliving the moment when they decided to make the leap from prewar Park Avenue to their current $2 million, high-ceilinged three-bedroom in one of the nineties' signature residential developments. The seduction, which began in March 1999, was conducted with virtual-reality tours (on which the developer, Harry Macklowe, spent $100,000), renderings of the elegant Hugh Hardy facade, and with brochure copy that promised "a residents-only private lounge and dining room," along with a "cortile"—a *cortile!*—"patterned after the intimate colonnaded courtyards of Rome."

"I have to admit," she confesses, "I was somewhat captivated."

Eleven months later, however, the thrill is definitely gone, and hell hath no fury like a luxury-condo buyer scorned. "The hardwood floors look like rippling waves," the man says. "They told us oak floors are subject to shrinkage and swelling," the woman adds. "I'm a New Yorker, I've had wood floors all my life, and nothing ever got swollen or shrunk." There are floor-to-ceiling cracks bisecting the toile wallpaper in the study, and stained bathroom marble. The glass doors to the "Juliet" balcony are so heavy, they bent their own hinges. "Our contractor came in and said, 'We've never seen walls this uneven.' "

Then came the last straw: "I'm going to flush the toilet," she says, jumping up from the floral-patterned couch and marching down a long hallway to the powder room. Moments later, there's a furious, crushing explosion—*sssssppplllll-luuuuussssshhhhhh!!!* She marches back in. "And that's with the door closed."

East Side Story: Macklowe Properties' 145 East 76th Street.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PAK FUNG WONG

WHEN NINETIES MONEY WENT SEARCHING for trophies, much of it ended up in buildings like 145 East 76th Street, which combines prewar details like maid's rooms, back stairs, and fireplaces with top-of-the-line amenities, appliances, and technology. They promised an idealized vision of Manhattan living to people—bonus-heavy Wall Streeters, Internet moguls, Warren Buffett charter investors—whose financial lives in the nineties couldn't have been more ideal.

These promises were typically made in hyperbolic brochures, one of the great art forms of the real-estate boom: heavy, luxe folders, packed with CD-ROMs, sentimental snapshots of neighborhood hot spots (Prada, Fendi, and the Carlyle, in the case of 145 East 76th Street), and near-pornographic pamphlets mapping out the promised land. For gourmands, there were Viking stoves. Webheads and workaholics got ISDN lines. Design connoisseurs were wooed with a Robert Stern façade or a David Rockwell lobby. Europhiles got details like the aforementioned cortile for dining alfresco (though just how many knew what it was is open to debate). And if creature comforts couldn't close the sale, celebrities did. Just about every boldface name that signed a contract for one of these buildings—or even trooped through with a broker—seemed to end up in the gossip columns.

Given the expectations that were loaded onto these apartments, how could the reality possibly measure up? But in a world where every tech stock went up, up, up, reality wasn't a major concern.

Now it's cold-grey-dawn time. "A lot of people are disappointed," says Michele Kleier, chairman of the brokerage firm Gumley Haft Kleier. "It's like buying from a catalog. The fabric looks beautiful in the catalog, but when you actually touch it, it doesn't feel as good as it looked."

"IT'S LIKE BUYING FROM A CATALOG. THE FABRIC LOOKS BEAUTIFUL. BUT THEN YOU TOUCH IT."

At 145 East 76th, as at a few other new buildings, recriminations and bickering are the order of the day, and the three residents who sit on the building's board have begun battling Macklowe to have the building's deficiencies addressed. "Macklowe's like a character in a Molière play," says a resident. "He thinks he's a wonderful person, but he's a clown in my eyes. The attitude is, you don't like it, sell the apartment or fix it yourself."

The Macklowe camp, of course, sees things differently. "We have a flooring issue," allows William Macklowe, son of Harry and executive vice-president of Macklowe Properties Inc. "And there are some individual punch-list issues. But this is not something we've dropped the ball on. When you have a successful sales program and you sell out during construction," he continues, "once the building's done you get a rash of move-ins, and that really takes a physical toll on a building. The unit owners, I think, have very good value and should enjoy their apartments."

OF ALL THE NEW CONSTRUCTION, THE Chatham, at 65th and Third, is considered the best in value by many industry players. (As Dolly Lenz, executive vice-president of Douglas Elliman, is quick to note, she was able to sell a $3 million three-bedroom there for $5 million in one day.) But that doesn't mean that all those who actually plan on moving into the Robert Stern–designed building are satisfied. One buyer started to worry when the developer, Related Companies, wouldn't let her inside her $900-a-square-foot apartment-in-progress. "First they promised I could see it when the building was framed out. Then they said not until ten days before we closed. I don't think I ever would have signed up for something that I really was never going to get a chance to see or plan in an organized fashion. The other thing that really ticked me off was that the master bath was designed with no medicine cabinet. That was their idea of fine. You'd get the hair spray when you meant to get the deodorant and pick out the killer pills instead of the aspirin because you'd be reaching down into a drawer. They wouldn't put one in, nor would they leave the bathroom blank. It was highly annoying." Aside from the unexpected $900 a month for a garage space she was lucky to get (residents of the 24th floor and above got first garage dibs), the biggest disappointment of all was not having the first-class restaurant she once heard was to be run by Jean-Georges Vongerichten. "That was a big hook for me. It was in all their marketing materials," she says. "I heard they had it stationed too close to a church entrance. So they couldn't get a liquor license and had to cancel it. Somebody really screwed up big-time."

A spokesman for the Chatham says the decision not to have a restaurant had nothing to do with proximity to a church or difficulty getting a liquor license, but that after trying unsuccessfully to secure a dining establishment for the space, they decided on a different course and are now looking for a spa. Since the restaurant was only mentioned in the marketing materials and not in the offering plan, a lawsuit is not an option. "Believe me," she says, "I asked my lawyer."

Many in the real-estate business would be more than happy to hold a gigantic pity party for these disgruntled buyers. "People are just going to complain one way or another," sighs a broker who specializes in the Upper East Side. "Are the finishes going to be what someone who's spending $15 million might put in their house? Probably not, but they should have known that going into it."

"You always have to deal with a few teething troubles," says Corcoran broker Leonard Steinberg. "Even with the best buildings, I tell my customers to expect problems. People are finding out that developers aren't gods. They are just people who made spaces available. Assume you buy in the Chelsea Mercantile and you just hate the subway tiles in the second bathroom. You hire a contractor and you spend $20,000 to get a new bathroom put in. It's still an incredible value. I always thank God that I can afford good clothes and a decent haircut, because without them I'd be pretty darn ugly."

Still, buying an apartment before it's built poses a unique set of difficulties. "There's a temptation for the developer to cut corners once all the apartments are sold," says Lenz.

"Things have gotten so expensive construction-wise in New York that it's becoming very difficult to build things the right way and still make a nickel," concurs David Goldsmith, director of marketing at DG Neary Realty. He recently toured a high-profile development in the West Village and returned with horror stories: "They used green board instead of WonderBoard for the wet areas around the tub, which means the painted surface around the tub is going to go," he says. "And they had this huge oval steeping tub with only half-inch piping to the spigot. Do you know how long it takes to fill up a tub that huge with half-inch piping? But it's cheaper." In a Chelsea conversion, he saw water cascading over just-installed insulation. "Over time, it's going to mildew and start to stink."

THE ICE HOUSE, AT 27 NORTH Moore Street, is downtown's poster child for the pitfalls of luxury conversion. Its high-profile residents, including Billy Crystal, sportscaster Warner Wolf, and Alexis Stewart (yes, that's Martha's daughter), all of whom reportedly have $2 million penthouses, could not get the principals of 27 North Moore Associates LLC to fix a long list of problems, ranging from buckling floors to plumbing problems. In January, Attorney General Eliot Spitzer stepped in with an $8 million lawsuit citing 26 defects in the 57-unit building. (The suit was reportedly settled—for

Helter shelter: Zeckendorf Realty's 515 Park Avenue.

the full amount—two weeks ago.)

Problems there certainly were. But Corcoran's Steinberg maintains that "if you add up the pros, the cons fade into insignificance. The Ice House has phenomenal spaces with phenomenal windows, incredible ceilings, working fireplaces. A lot of these new developments are like Christmas gifts. They really are."

Construction delays have also created a new class: the superrich refugee. "I've got a lot of people staying in hotels," says Lenz. "I had one client who had to live in a studio for six months," adds Steinberg. "Then she moved into an apartment in the North Moore just shy of 2,000 square feet." "My client was supposed to close on the Empire in July; she moved in in January," reports the broker on the deal. (The Empire spokesman Steve Solomon insists, "There were no major construction glitches. Closings began in November and proceeded very smoothly.")

Others are being forced by developers to close on their apartments before the rest of the building is finished—or, as some would argue, even livable. "BridgeTower is a construction site," says a condo broker for developer Dan Brodsky's BridgeTower Place on East 60th Street. "Everything is full of dust." (Brodsky insists that while "there was some construction going on on the lower floors and the very top floors," the building was more than habitable when the first residents moved in last November.) Donald Trump anticipated first closings on his 90-story Trump World Tower in April 2001; they began in December 2000, even though the building's top half is still going up. "People were standing in line with money in their hands," says a real-estate lawyer. "They're not going to let you put in all these clauses to postpone. If you're buying ten floors," he notes, only half-jokingly, "then maybe."

ALL OF WHICH PROMPTS A SIGNIFICANT number of buyers to put their purchases right back on the market, sometimes without ever laying down a single Aubusson carpet. At Zeckendorf Realty's 515 Park Avenue, former PolyGram CEO Alain Levy is reportedly trying to flip the apartment that he bought for $11.5 million. The asking price was reduced to $16.5 million from $18 million in January. He is not alone: 13 out of the building's 37 apartments have come up for resale. Not a surprise to brokers who cite low-quality light fixtures and kitchen cabinets, given the record-setting asking price.

"I sold something at the Westbury," adds Michele Kleier, "a beautiful apartment. When the woman went to do her walk-through the day before the closing, she said, 'There's no back door for garbage.' I said, 'Well, whoever said there was?' She said, 'Well, I never thought to ask that question. I can't possibly live in an apartment where I have to put my garbage out the front door.' So we put it back on the market and sold it overnight for a million-dollar profit. We closed on Friday at 3 P.M. for $3.5 million; by Sunday she had $4.5 million. You have to understand that with all the money that's been floating around the last few years, it's become, 'If you don't like something, why keep it?' "

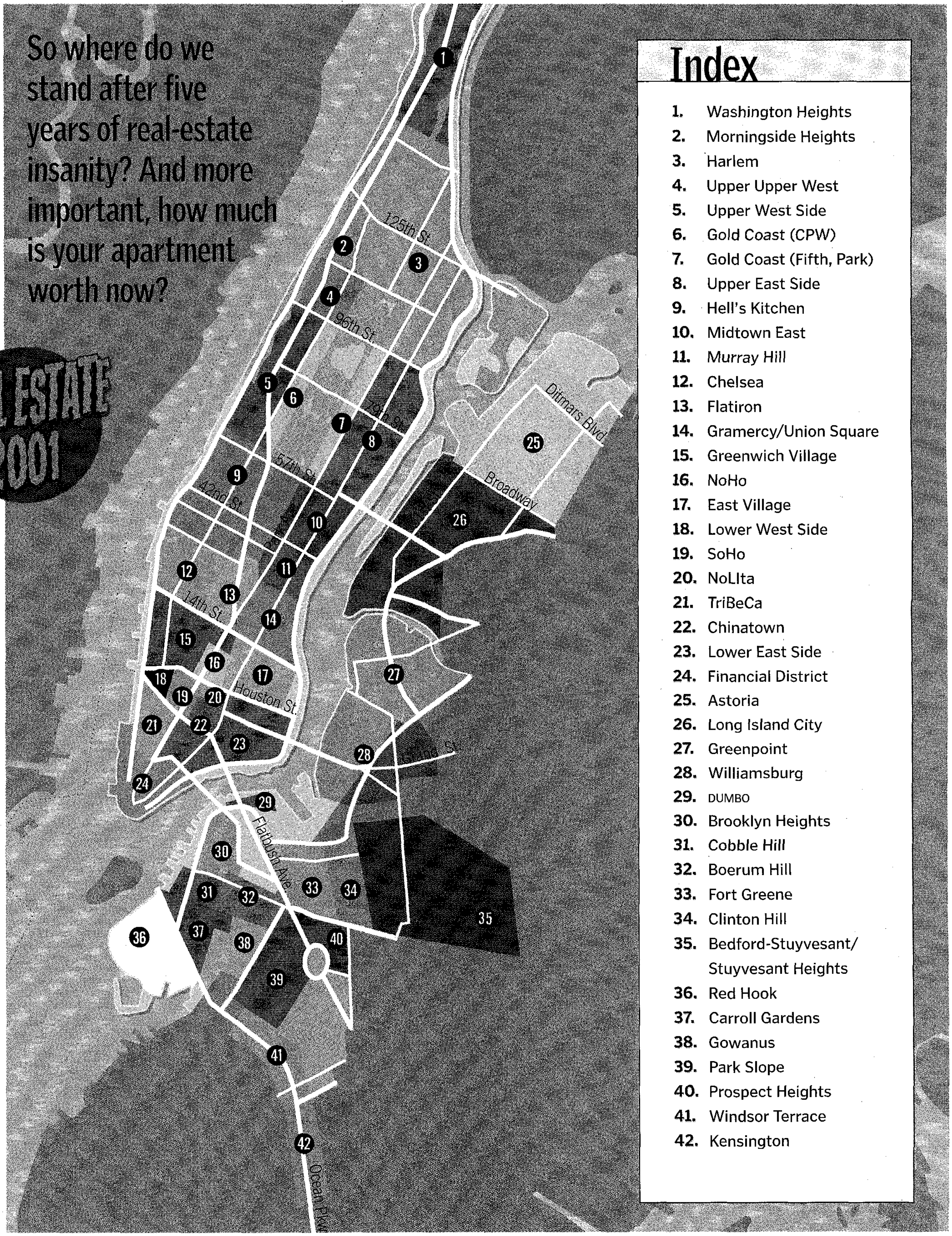
At the Chelsea Mercantile on 252 Seventh Avenue, where prices have gone up 50 percent, Rockrose Development Corporation is willing to let owners flip their apartments to a third party without closing, according to the company's Charles Singer. In other cases, some brokers suspect sponsors make changes in floor plans to encourage just such an end result. "Sponsors would love to see people default," agrees real-estate lawyer Errol Brett, who has one client waiting two years to move in to the Park Laurel. "If I came to them and said, 'He's pissed, he's not going ahead,' they'd say, 'Okay, here's his money back.' They figure they can make another $500,000 or $600,000. But he'd have to start over, and a $1.3 million apartment now is not the same as a $1.3 million apartment in 1999."

Back at 145 East 76th Street, our guide has also forgone the idea of starting over, and instead has fully committed herself to the crusade of obtaining the level of luxury she paid for. On a tour of the "private lounge and dining room"—which ended up resembling a ballroom at "a low-end Marriott"—she reports the space is going to be refashioned as a children's play area. The cortile, which was covered with gravel instead of the more elegant paving stones in the rendering, is, at the board's insistence, being redone in the spring. "I thought this would be like a Park Avenue white-glove building," she says, heading back toward the elevator. "Macklowe thinks this is first-class. But he wouldn't know first-class if it hit him." Thankfully, the toilets are next on her list. ■

THE NEIGHBORHOODS

REAL ESTATE 2001

So where do we stand after five years of real-estate insanity? And more important, how much is your apartment worth now?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79th St.
57th St.
42nd St.
14th St.
Houston St.
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Broadway
Flatbush Ave.
Ocean Pkwy.
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MAP BY JOE ZEFF

WEST VILLAGE BROWNSTONE
21 West 13th Street
sold for $[illegible] million [illegible]

Greenwich Village

The Village didn't change all that much during this boom, at least from the sidewalk. Spend a Sunday walking down Bleecker or Hudson and, unlike most everywhere else in town, you're not passing a Gap on every block but tailors, bakers, and arts-and-crafts shops. Which isn't to say that the boom skipped over Greenwich Village. Prices have doubled for renters, buyers, and leasers alike—hence the meatpacking district's morphing into a Eurotrash sandbox—but the new crop of Village people still clings to the idea of being bohemian, so long as bohemia is a land of frothy lattes, $35 spiced-duck risotto, and square-toed Gucci loafers.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$175K-$380K	$350K-$875K
2 BR	$375K-$725K	$780K-$1.65M
Townhouse	$650K-$2M	$2M-$10M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1,150-$2,000	$1,700-$3,800
2 BR	$2,300-$3,100	$3,900-$6,500
3 BR	$2,700-$5,000	$5,000-$11K

STREET LIFE: Five years ago, a stroll through Washington Square Park meant fending off a half-dozen drug dealers. Today, you'll still get propositioned, but five of those six are likely to be narcs. (And the whole thing will be captured on video!) Back then, the meatpacking district was a parade ground for transvestite hookers. The girls are mostly gone now, making the streets safe for the likes of Julia Roberts and Mike Wallace.

MIGRATIONS: "There's been this huge invasion of families, young professionals, and couples," says James Ferrari, chairman of Benjamin James Associates. "It used to be more of an old New York neighborhood, young artist types and old people." In today's market, young people have little chance of making their home in the Village. "The only true artsy people living in the Village now are NYU students with tri-state guarantors," says Ferrari. "Kids whose parents are big-money doctors and lawyers." Another big shift was the gay migration to Chelsea. Christopher Street is still lined with rainbow flags, but the boys in the bars are likely to live north of 14th Street, or be tourists.

TIPPING POINT: With its slick asphalt for fanatical Rollerbladers and verdant lawns for fanatical sunbathers, the newly renovated Hudson promenade has given the West Village the one thing it never had: somewhere to play. "It's like the new Gold Coast," says William B. May broker Marc Maider. "You used to walk around there with a big dog and still be nervous."

WHAT'S NEW: Among the few new buildings to have gone up is 495 West Street, a residence curiously designed to look like a converted factory, with raw-space lofts that went quickly at between $1 million and $4 million. There's also the Kimberly at 534 Hudson, which replaced the garage made famous in *Taxi* and offers apartments with fireplaces, terraces, cherry-wood kitchen cabinetry, and a concierge (a third-floor two-bedroom with two and half baths is on the market for $1.15 million). Now talk centers on the Richard Meier–designed towers going up at 173 and 176 Perry Street. Future tenants include Martha Stewart and Calvin Klein, who forked over a reported $12 million to $15 million for a duplex penthouse.

PROGNOSIS: "It's one of the most stable neighborhoods in the city," says Maider. "It's a lot tamer now, okay, but it is what it is. The people who choose to live in the Village do so because they're down-to-earth." Except that down-to-earth now seems to require an MBA.

DAVID AMSDEN

Chelsea

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$180K-$375K	$265K-$825K
2 BR	$475K-$700K	$875K-$1.6M
Loft	$900K-$2M	$2.1M-$10M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1,050-$1,900	$1,700-$3,700
2 BR	$2,200-$3,000	$3,800-$6,000
Loft	$3,500-$4,500	$6,500-$11K

Not so long ago, Chelsea was the "ugly stepsister of the Village," says Gil Neary of DG Neary Realty (whose motto is "A Castle for Every Queen"). With the exception of a few places like London Terrace—now nicknamed the "fashion projects"—it was rarely a first-choice real-estate destination. But then Eighth Avenue became Main Street U.S.A. for the buffest segment of the region's gay population. After it was tamed by stridently cute little cafés, Chelsea quickly grew to become one of the tightest markets in Manhattan, one that is increasingly not-so-gay anymore. And with thousands of new apartments in 22 new

Photographed by Kristine Larson.

CHELSEA CO-OP
Asking $439,000 on West 23rd (unfurnished).

buildings going up on the parking lots and gas stations that used to dot the area, a great deal of money is betting that it's going to stay that way.

CREATURE COMFORTS: With more than 150 galleries, ranging from Gagosian's huge space to art-market mini-malls, Chelsea's western fringe has been transformed from a wasteland of taxi garages and warehouses into one of the city's unlikeliest Town Car destinations. In addition to the Chelsea Piers, restaurants, and clubs, suburban-culture outposts like Starbucks and Banana Republic have arrived during the past half-decade, along with ever-more-monstrous supermarkets. A huge Food Emporium has replaced the Associated on 26th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues that used to cater to the housing projects on Ninth Avenue. The Whole Foods in Chelsea Mercantile and the D'Agostino's on 17th Street are also new.

TIPPING POINT: The opening of the Chelsea Piers complex in 1995—which seemed like folly at the time—shifted the focus of the neighborhood west. It also made the area's already well-established obsession with fitness seem more wholesome and family-oriented. Meanwhile, the drive for groovier, cheaper office space turned nearby industrial spaces into commercial ones.

WHAT'S NEW: Thanks to a 1999 zoning change, parking lots, mostly on Sixth and Seventh Avenues, were redeveloped by a march of brick rental towers, crowding out the flea market. High-end warehouse- loft conversions like the Eagle and the Spears followed the galleries from SoHo. "The fringes to the west and the north, which were once not considered Chelsea at all, are now the most dynamic areas," says Edward Ferris of William B. May.

PROGNOSIS: What's done is done: "The area has really become sanitized," says Tom Jenkinson, an architect who is moving out after living in the neighborhood for twelve years. "When I moved to Chelsea, there was a certain vibrancy that is no longer there. The mix has gone from gay and Hispanic to primarily straight." There are still parking lots to be built on, and it abuts the next unused parcel of Manhattan in the West Thirties, where the mayor wants to build a stadium. Still, many wonder if, in the event of a recession, there's a need for another brick rental on 23rd and Tenth.

BEN SISARIO

Hell's Kitchen

Now that Chelsea and the Upper West Side have been thoroughly digested by the forces of gentrification, brokers and developers have been elbowing one another for a piece of this rent-regulated working-class stronghold. Along Eighth Avenue, residential towers are springing up like wildflowers, housing people who work in the new Times Square office district. Restaurants such as Esca and Above and new hotels have opened their doors to crowds going to *The Lion King* or *Cabaret*—and given the area's indigenous actor population work.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$100K-$175K	$400-$450K
2 BR	$160K-$225K	$500K-$600K
Loft	$200K-$500K	$750K-$1M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$750-$1,700	$2,000-$2,500
2 BR	$2,000-$2,500	$2,900-$3,200
3 BR	$2,200-$2,800	$3,200-$3,500

TIPPING POINT: Times Square's rebirth had the biggest overall impact, but when Kenneth Cole moved his headquarters in 1999 from Carnegie Hall Tower to 50th Street at Eleventh Avenue—an area surrounded by auto dealerships—other outsiders began giving the neighborhood a second look. The Hudson Hotel on 58th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues cranked up the heat as well. "That's been huge," says Evie Scocos at Citi-Habitats. "There was nothing there before."

WHAT'S NEW: Two of the biggest residential projects have been Larry Silverstein's massive River Place apartment tower at 42nd Street near Twelfth Avenue and the New Gotham on 43rd between Ninth and Tenth. Both capitalized on the Times Square and Broadway booms. The openings of two luxury apartment buildings, the Gershwin and Longacre House at 50th Street and Eighth Avenue (one-bedrooms start at $3,000), dramatically changed the tenor of the former Eighth Avenue porn corridor, bringing upscale restaurants like the Palm West and spacious grocery stores stocked with jicama and farmhouse cheeses (like the new gargantuan Food Emporium on Eighth Avenue).

CREATURE COMFORTS: "We got a Starbucks now! The whole neighborhood's going to hell!" laughs Lindy Bondy, a broker for Klara Madlin Real Estate who moved here from Westchester eleven years ago. Along with better restaurants, new cineplexes (including one 25-screen behemoth), and arcades, bars like Chase and clubs like B.B. King

Photographed by Eric McNatt.

Blues Club have multiplied entertainment options.

STREET LIFE: "The neighborhood has just changed so drastically," says Scocos. Scocos touts the large number of actors who give the neighborhood its character, but others argue that they're already getting priced out. "People are afraid of gentrification and of things becoming too homogeneous," says Doug Heddings, a real-estate agent with Douglas Elliman who has sold nearly twenty apartments to bankers and attorneys in the Armory, a former military building that is still, at the moment, occupied mostly by artists, but now commands seven-figure prices. "It's more like *Heaven's* Kitchen now," says Peter Browne, broker for Stribling.

PROGNOSIS: More of the same for years to come. With the railyards and all the industrial property, this area is ripe for both residential and commercial development. The biggest project: the proposed West Side Stadium, which the Jets would like to call home for eight games a year, and where the city would like to host a big chunk of the 2012 Summer Olympics. To the north, at Columbus Circle, construction is beginning on the AOL Time Warner world headquarters, a project that includes 198 posh pieds-à-terre. ROB TURNER

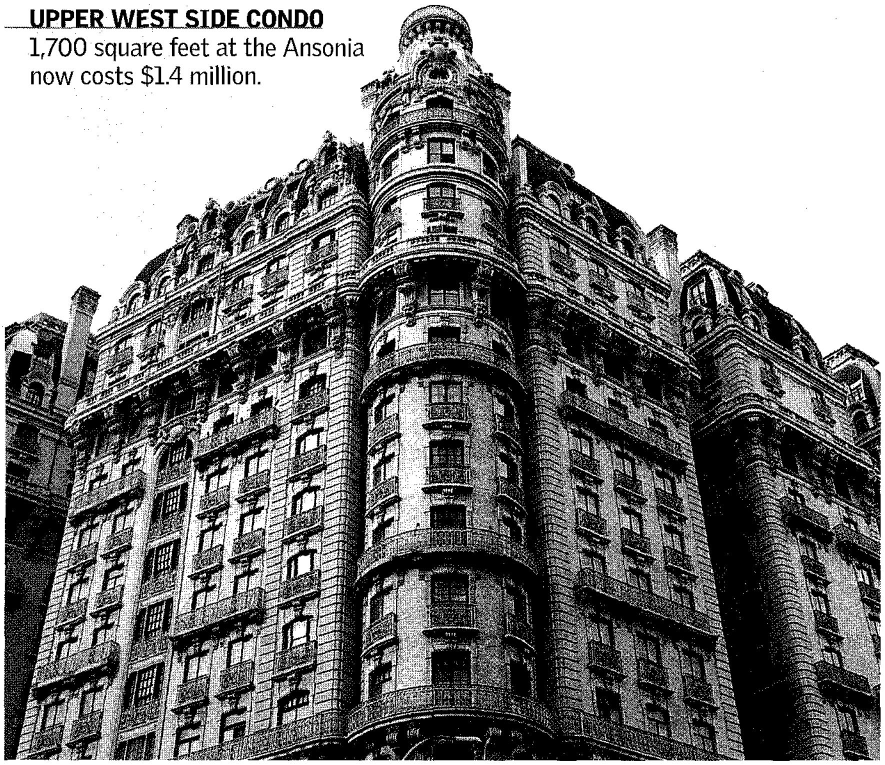
Upper West Side

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$150K-$250K	$375K-$420K
2 BR	$285K-$350K	$575K-$700K
3 BR	$700K-$750K	$900K-$1.5M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1,200-$1,900	$1,800-$2,700
2 BR	$2,600-$2,800	$3,100-$4,800
3 BR	$3,200-$3,700	$4,100-$7,000

Three years ago, Nora Ephron gave this neighborhood a huge, wet kiss with *You've Got Mail.* While immortalizing immortal Zabar's, Gray's Papaya, and the small neighborhood bookstore, Ephron also turned her lens on newer arrivals like the Sony Lincoln Square cineplex and Starbucks. The moral? Learn to love the upscale chains. In the past five years, Zabar's and Citarella have improved and expanded, there are more destination restaurants (Jean Georges, Picholine, Ruby Foo's), and, yes, the megastores have arrived: Pottery Barn (1996), Staples (1998), Gracious Home (1999), Victoria's Secret (2000), and, most recently, Balducci's. Donald Trump is capitalizing on all this expansion with more towering skyscrapers. But hey, it all worked out in the movie.


UPPER WEST SIDE CONDO
1,700 square feet at the Ansonia now costs $1.4 million.

GROWING PAINS: The biggest catalyst for change has been the transformation of Lincoln Square. Between 1994 and 1997, with the addition of Millennium Towers and the Reebok Club, and the retail boom (including another monster Barnes & Noble), a quiet residential area became clogged. "Put yourself down anywhere in the upper Sixties on the West Side and you could be on the East Side," says Warren Pearl, a broker at Prudential MLB Kaye and a longtime West Side resident. "I much prefer north of 72nd Street, where we have fewer high-rises and you can actually see the sky."

STREET LIFE: Even the subway has been gentrified, with vastly improved access at Lincoln Center, whimsical mosaics installed at the 81st Street museum stop, and the $53 million renovation of the 72nd Street station. With new health clubs, more retail, improvements to Riverside Park, and the spectacular new planetarium, the dog- and kid-friendly West Side continues to draw families.

MIGRATIONS: Families who have long embraced the Upper West Side's good schools (public and private) and park access have been shunted north as the economic ripple effect from Lincoln Square has pushed home prices up and availability down in the Sixties and Seventies, sending "families who want quiet, tree-lined streets" higher than they would have considered only five years ago, says Halstead's Deanna Kory.

WHAT'S NEW: The Trumping of the West Side: Trump Place—a sixteen-tower residential development with 5,700 new apartments—is well under way, with three towers finished. Stretching from 59th to 72nd Streets, the project has been plagued by protests, but is actually starting to win people over with its newly opened public space and pier at West 70th Street.

PROGNOSIS: How much more development can the Upper West Side withstand? They haven't even gotten warmed up. The $1.5 billion retooling of Lincoln Center could take nearly a decade to complete, and may include a second opera house or a commercial high-rise. Expect the nesting trend to become even more pronounced as once chopped-up apartments are restored to their original, family-size proportions. R.T.

Photographed by Sean Hemmerle.

Upper Upper West Side

THE NUMBERS:

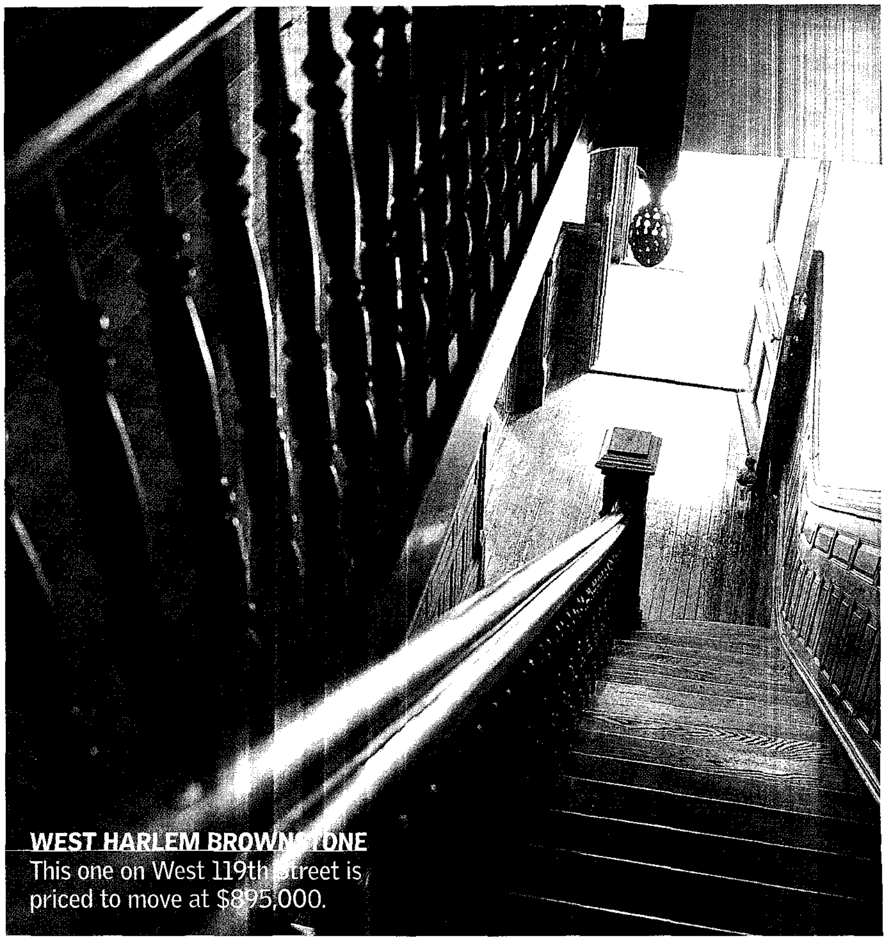
Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$125K-$175K	$200K-$350K
2 BR	$150K-$350K	$300K-$600K
Townhouse	$400K-$700K	$1.2M-$2.5M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$700-$1,200	$1,200-$2,000
2 BR	$900-$1,250	$1,800-$2,500
3 BR	$1,500-$2,500	$1,900-$3,300

The former hotbed of anti-war, anti-racism, anti-fascism, anti-Columbia University-ism protest, the "Acropolis on the Hudson" has gone bobo. "Five years ago, people didn't want to be above 86th Street," says Prudential MLB Kaye's Tina Witt. "Then it was 96th Street. In the last several years, Morningside Heights has been one of the only areas left to get space for your dollars." Once known as the repository of more SROs and homeless shelters than any other community in the city, the neighborhood overall has never been cleaner or safer. While longtime residents say they miss the street-corner poets and composers, the neighborhood definitely has a spruced-up feel. For the first time, adventurous young lawyers and investment bankers feel comfortable heading north of 96th Street.

CREATURE COMFORTS: The neighborhood's commercial businesses have worked to keep up. "We could use a few more grocery stores and a deli," says broker Rick Wohlfarth of Rick Wohlfarth & Associates. "But there's a dry cleaner on every other block." In serpentine Riverside Park, the playgrounds at 97th Street, 105th Street, and 111th Street have been heavily renovated. A Gourmet Garage opened near 96th Street three years ago, but most residents shop at West Side Market, on 110th, and at the Fairway warehouse, at 132nd Street and the river. The number of takeout places has exploded, and wannabe-upscale restaurants and markets have recently opened on Broadway, especially in Columbia-owned buildings between 110th and 116th Streets.

STREET LIFE: "People are astounded at how quiet the sidewalks here are," says Ariela Heilman, a broker at Klara Madlin. "There just isn't the usual frenetic weekend activity of other areas." If it weren't for the students and professors hitting the late-night bistros and the handful of bars, the area could be Carnegie Hill. Middle-class parents and their kids love the proximity to Central and Riverside parks, and most buildings allow pets. Some folks complain that gentrification has all but erased the neighborhood's character. But with the concentration of schools, some things will never change.


WEST HARLEM BROWNSTONE
This one on West 119th Street is priced to move at $895,000.

MIGRATIONS: Many of the Hispanic working class who dominated Manhattan Valley for decades are being pushed out by the middle-class move uptown. B-J and Dov Frishberg have lived in Morningside Heights for 30 years and bought a two-bedroom apartment there last year so they could stay indefinitely. "There's so much space it feels like a house," B-J says. They love the proximity to Columbia, and B-J especially appreciates the university's security. "There are guards set up around the campus, and the vehicles drive slowly from block to block." On upper Central Park West, mixed-priced co-ops, condos, and apartments have been built where drug gangs used to host nightly shoot-outs.

PROGNOSIS: Columbia continues to gobble up property. Central Park West has some upscale projects in the works, including the former Towers Nursing Home (see page 53). ABBY TEGNELIA

Hudson Heights

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$40K-$70K	$165K-$300K
2 BR	$90K-$140	$300K-$450K
4 BR	$200K-$300K	$500K-$750K

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$500-$700	$1,000-$1,600
2 BR	$900-$1,400	$1,800-$2,400
3 BR	$1,400-$1,600	$2,400-$3,000

Upper West Side renters have been quietly relocating to Hudson Heights ever since the low-rise, prewar buildings went co-op in the mid-eighties. They get to keep their river views, and Fort Tryon Park access is a bonus. Brokers feared that Washington Heights' heavily publicized drug corners and crime scenes would discourage sales, but demand continues to rise, and now trendy restaurants and frilly boutiques have emerged. The local grocery store has begun stocking organic poultry, yellow-stem tomatoes, and escargot, and building owners are sprucing up their courtyards with leafy shrubs and flowers.

POPULATION SHIFTS: "Performers started to move in when they saw how big the apartments were," says broker Simone Song. For what it would cost to rent a

Photographed by Eric McNatt.

one-bedroom on 79th and West End, you can get a three-bedroom with a terrace on Fort Washington Avenue. Lenny Hickey and his wife bought a two-bedroom co-op in Hudson View Gardens, a Tudor-style complex built in 1924, for $100,000 five years ago. "I live next door to a music teacher, a conductor from the Singapore Philharmonic, a jazz critic from the *Times*, and a daytime producer from CBS," he says. "From my bedroom, we can see the Palisades Parkway and the river."

STREET LIFE: Around the time the market began to shift, the corner of 181st Street and Pinehurst was still problematic. "You used to see cars broken into, people peddling stuff on the street, squeegee men trying to wash your car. But now we can walk down the street without a threat," says Bill Rodriguez, co-owner of Frank's Market on 187th Street.

CREATURE COMFORTS: A free shuttle drops residents in front of Fairway at 132nd Street. Frank's Market, a 53-year-old neighborhood butcher, recently doubled its size and started selling gourmet fare like South African oranges, criminis, and beluga caviar. Last year, when places like CVS, Rite Aid, and Duane Reade were taking over local drugstores, Hilltop Pharmacy expanded its corner store on Fort Washington.

WHAT'S NEW: Gut renovations were recently completed on a three-floor, eight-unit rental building at 344 Cabrini that was vacant for fifteen years. The apartments, mostly studios and one-bedrooms, were snatched up almost immediately for prices ranging from $800 to $1,600 a month, says Gus Perry, president of Stein-Perry Realty. There's talk that the twin property next door will go condo next summer. "They'd have to get really high numbers for those apartments," says Perry. "Can we sell million-dollar, two-bedroom units in Washington Heights? I don't know."

PROGNOSIS The secret is out. "People come up here because it's cheap, it's quiet, and it's beautiful," says broker Michael Jones at Citi-Habitats. "So what if it's an extra twenty minutes on the subway?" JOY ARMSTRONG

Harlem

With the arrival of American icons like Disney, Gap, Starbucks, and Bill Clinton, it seems that the much-vaunted "renaissance" has finally arrived, raising market values higher than they've ever been. Buyers who would never have considered moving to Harlem five years ago are scrambling to pick up new townhouses and restored nineteenth-century brownstones for as little as $200,000 and as much as $1.5 million. Most properties need extensive renovation, and much of the neighborhood remains blighted with poverty, but that hasn't stopped bargain hunters. "Soon I don't think you're going to be able to find an investment anymore," says Douglas Elliman's Mickey Garcia. "I think everything's going to be gone."

POPULATION SHIFTS: Rising real-estate values have helped whites overcome their reservations about moving to the capital of black America. "You can enjoy a quiet neighborhood, a beautiful backyard, and a lot of square footage for a not-so-exorbitant price," says Michael Larkin, who just finished a $300,000 renovation of a former SRO. Black professionals who grew up in the neighborhood are moving back. Rhahime Bell, a 31-year-old investment banker, purchased a four-story home on Striver's Row after his landlord raised the rent on his one-bedroom on 102nd Street and West End two years ago. His 4,500-square-foot carriage house on 138th Street between Adam Clayton Powell Jr. and Frederick Douglass Boulevard, with six working fireplaces, original moldings, and a three-car driveway, cost him about $400,000.

THE NUMBERS:

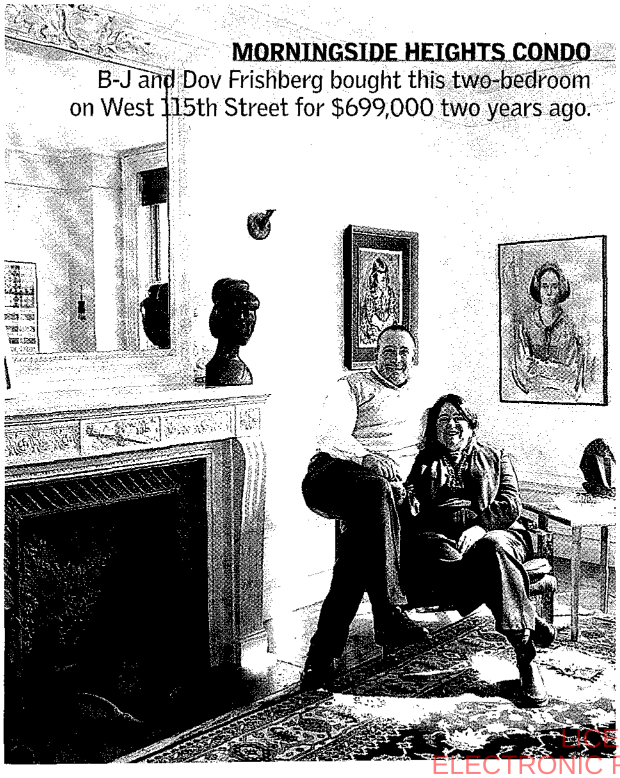
Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$50K-$70K	$125K-$375K
2 BR	$80K-$200K	$150K-$500K
Brownstone	$65K-$275K	$400K-$1.5M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$400-$600	$900-$1,500
2 BR	$600-$800	$1,100-$2,500
3 BR	$800-$1,000	$2,000-$3,000

CREATURE COMFORTS: Change in Harlem's commercial environment "hasn't kept pace with the changes in the residential demographic," says Scott Kinder at Prudential MLB Kaye. But maybe not for long: The $58 million Harlem USA shopping mall, with a nine-screen cineplex and an Old Navy, lit up 125th Street last year. And more development is sure to follow. Until Fairway opened on Twelfth Avenue five years ago, Harlem had been without a full-service supermarket for twenty years; now there's also a giant Pathmark in East Harlem on 125th Street. A slew of new eateries, including Bayou, Sugar Shack, and Jimmy's Uptown, have opened. But there are virtually no gyms in East Harlem, and "you can't get stuff delivered at two in the morning like downtown," says Corcoran's Spencer Means.

WHAT'S NEW: The Harlem Community Development Corporation recently sold twenty two- and three-family city-owned brownstones between 120th and 123rd Streets near Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard, priced at around $350,000. Landlords are carving up buildings to make bigger—and fewer—apartments. "If there are under six units, they don't have to deal with rent-stabilization guidelines," says Kinder.

PROGNOSIS: Some wonder if the flip side of diversity is displacement of longtime residents. But further development is perhaps inevitable: "They've built most of TriBeCa, Battery Park, and SoHo, but Harlem still has space," explains Corcoran Group's Vie Wilson. "The possibilities are still here. There is no more Manhattan." J. A. AND A. T.



MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS CONDO
B-J and Dov Frishberg bought this two-bedroom on West 115th Street for $699,000 two years ago.

Photographed by Carina Salvi

The Gold Coast

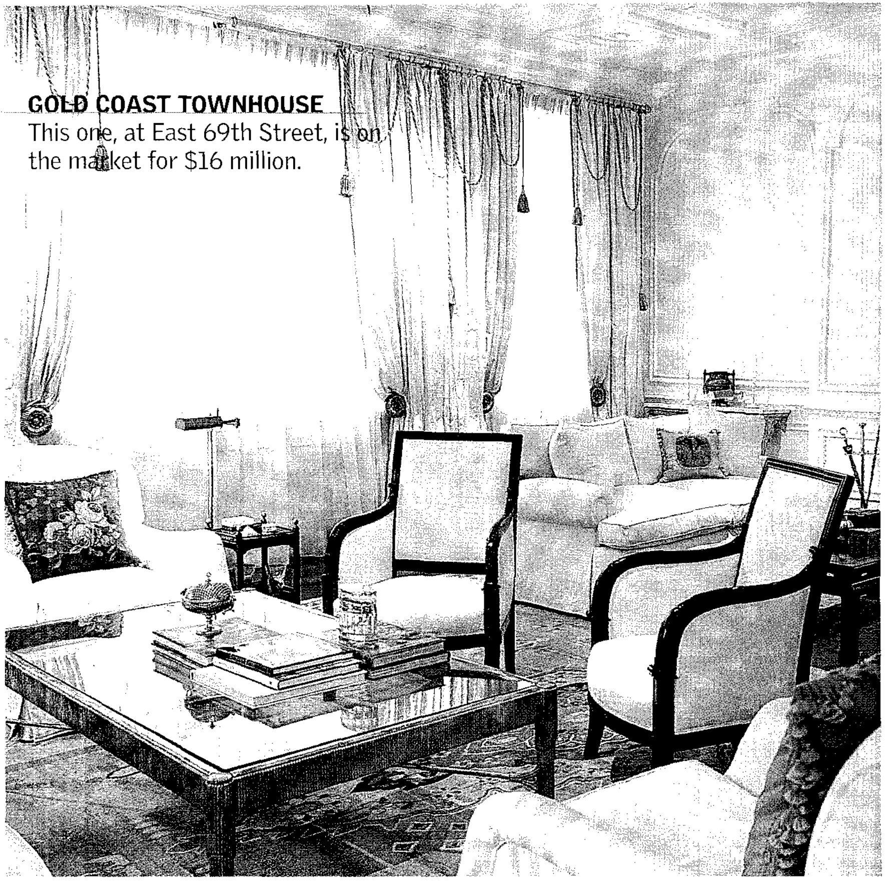
Traditionally, the limestone-clad blocks of prewar co-ops and townhouses bordering Central Park and lining Park Avenue have been the most expensive and sought-after shelter in town. And even with the prestige threat of TriBeCa and the West Village, nothing comes close to the prices up here. There's been so much demand that they had to increase supply—"the prime moved," says Douglas Elliman's Dolly Lenz. It expanded south, where the social set moved into condos at Trump's One Central Park West, across once-dowdy Central Park South and over to 515 Park Avenue. One condo at One Central Park West jumped in price from $7 million to $13.5 million. According to the Stribling Market Report, dollar volume for co-op sales over $4 million increased 106 percent last year. Giddy millionaires bought, and in their frenzy gutted, perfectly nice apartments and houses. "People went insane," said one broker. Soon, co-op boards put tough restrictions on renovations.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$320K-$800K	$890K-$1.1M
2 BR	$760K-900K	$1.5M-2.5M
3 BR	$1.35M-$3.8M	$2.9M-4M
4 BR	$3.3M-$10M	$8M-$15M
Townhouse	$1.7M-$6M	$8M-$22M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1.9K-2.2K	$2.3K-4K
2 BR	$3.3K-4.2K	$5.1-$6.2K
3 BR	$5.4K-$5.9K	$9.8K-$20K

WHAT'S NEW: Because these areas are landmarked, most of what's new involved the reuse of an old building. "The conversion of the Mayfair Regent at 610 Park in 1998 exemplifies the beginning of the market frenzy," says Gumley Haft Kleier president Michele Kleier. "They sold out in weeks and were flipped for huge profits." The Union of American Hebrew Congregations sold its longtime headquarters at 838 Fifth Avenue, which were converted to condos. In the meantime, people were buying townhouses and converting them back into mansions. Investor Bruce Kovner paid $17.5 million in 1999 for the International Center of Photography on Fifth Avenue and 94th Street. He plans to live in it. The top twelve floors of the old St. Moritz on Central Park South are going condo, too. No onerous board interviews, but "now condos are asking for disclosure, too," says Elliman's Linda Stein.



GOLD COAST TOWNHOUSE
This one, at East 69th Street, is on the market for $16 million.

TIPPING POINT: In 1998, a Goldman, Sachs partner paid $9.6 million for the kind of San Remo apartment that used to go for $4 million. Brokers still reminisce about Goldman's May 1999 IPO and what the suddenly-even-richer partners did to the market: "They just ran around, throwing the money around New York without any rhyme or reason," remembers one. But Stephen Schwarzman's $37.5 million purchase of the 34-room John D. Rockefeller apartment at 740 Park Avenue last year "was the absolute high point of the market," exclaims Kleier.

PROGNOSIS: "Buyers are in a holding pattern, but it's still a seller's market out there," says Sharon Baum of the Corcoran Group. Her best example? A five-story Neo-Federal built in 1887 on 69th Street. The townhouse was bought in 1999 for $8 million and it's now selling for $16 million. "It went on the market on a Friday, and by Tuesday we had an offer," says Baum. Brokers say asking prices will be met, but that nobody wants to be stuck with a top-of-the-market price when the music stops. MORGAN GOLDBERG

Upper East Side

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$250K-$300K	$350K-$400K
2 BR	$350K-450K	$500K-$850K
Townhouse	$1.5M-$3M	$3M-$7M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1,100-$2,200	$1,500-$2,800
2 BR	$1,800-$2,800	$2,400-$4,500
3 BR	$5,000-$8,000	$8,000-$14K

Once dismissed as a post-college dormitory for frat types bunking up to save a buck, the Upper East Side, east of Lexington Avenue, has morphed into a neighborhood of nesting strivers. "Once people had the money for more space, they either moved closer to the park or to the suburbs," says Citi-Habitats vice-president Gordon Golub. "Larger apartments were vacant for many weeks—often months—at a time." But once crime rates dropped and the bull market hit, landlords recognized a demand for more space and began combining smaller apartments into larger ones and rapidly converting rentals into condos. At the same time, the neighborhood's less-than-chic reputation has kept rental prices in check, making it a relative bargain given the number of restaurants and high-end boutiques that line its avenues—and the East River parks that line its shore.

MIGRATIONS: The well-to-do are no longer reluctant to settle down east of

Photographed by Carina Salvi.

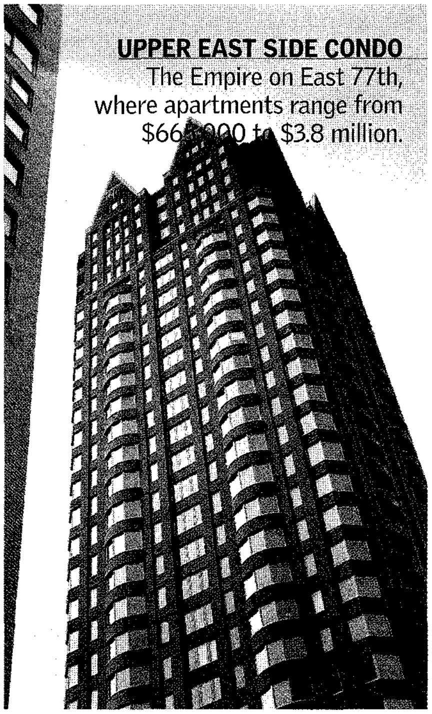
Third Avenue. And the sidewalks are choked with strollers. The new Mimi Maternity, on Third Avenue between 60th and 61st Streets, "is now one of our top-selling stores in the country," says MM honcho Rebecca Matthias.

CREATURE COMFORTS: Five years ago, two properties at 84th Street and First Avenue sat on the market for two and a half years before being leased to a bar and a real-estate office. Today, the storefronts along the eastern avenues are full of businesses catering to families and established professionals. Madison Avenue–quality stores and restaurants, like Scoop and Atlantic Grill, are scattered about, and almost every neighborhood has a gourmet grocer, from the Vinegar Factory at 91st Street and First to Citarella at 75th Street and Third Avenue.

TIPPING POINT: The completion of the Bridgemarket under the 59th Street Bridge in 1999 marked the push east of Second Avenue. The emergence of Guastavino's and Conran's marked the rebirth of an area known mostly for Score's and anchored the residential market along First Avenue in the low Sixties. What followed was a space race, retail as well as residential, along First Avenue up into the Seventies—a former "wasteland," recalls Golub.

WHAT'S NEW: At 210 East 68th Street, one- and two-bedroom prewar units were combined into family-size apartments, including a 3,500-square-foot penthouse with a 2,500-square-foot terrace, which was recently leased for $20,000 per month. One hundred eighty units in a just-completed building at 77th Street and First Avenue were built as rentals, but the developer saw how quickly buyers were snatching up condos in the neighborhood and opted instead to sell them (two-bedrooms start at $775,000). In the East Nineties, three major high-rises have been erected in the past year alone.

PROGNOSIS: "Right now, the Upper East Side, east of Lexington Avenue, is the most reasonable neighborhood in New York for rentals, except, perhaps, for Wall Street," says Golub. "If the market were to remain as hot as it's been, York would be the logical next step, in terms of development," he says. "But the market has already come down about 10 percent since its peak six months ago, and, some may argue, it will fall another 10 percent in the coming year." TARA MANDY



UPPER EAST SIDE CONDO The Empire on East 77th, where apartments range from $66[illegible],000 to $3.8 million.

Midtown East

Except for Sutton and Beekman Places, was there a neighborhood called Midtown East five years ago? And did anyone you knew really *want* to live there? "It was older and much more demographic-targeted," says James Ferrari of Benjamin James Associates. "Medical people, doctors, because of the hospitals over there. Or United Nations people." Otherwise the townhouses, and apartment buildings like One Sutton Place, were strictly for the chintz-and-mahogany old-money set. And nobody ever moved. No more. Nowadays, the neighborhood is awash in couples with young children seeking the kind of two- or three-bedroom prewars they've been priced out of on Park Avenue. "We've found that people are more interested in the space and less confined to being on a specific block or whatever," says Ferrari. "From 50th Street on down, especially, that's completely changed." And the prices have done the same: "Last year, we put the president of the U.N. in a $10,000-a-month rental on East 43rd."

STREET LIFE: There's no underestimating the effect of Bridgemarket on the neighborhood. "Spectacular," gushes William B. May broker Toby Gamsu. "The Food Emporium there is *an experience*." The Bridge Tower across the street, at 401 East 60th Street, is 100 percent sold and has brought tons of new people—as well as Bed Bath & Beyond—into the neighborhood.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$225K–$425K	$300K–$800K
2 BR	$400K–$800K	$550K–$1.5M
Townhouse	$995K–$3M	$2.5M–$8M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1,800–$4,500	$3,000–$4,500
2 BR	$2,200–$4,500	$4,700–$8,500
3 BR	$4,000–$6,000	$7,000–$15K

WHAT'S NEW: Aside from Bridge Tower, it's Trump-Trump-Trump. The 72-story dark-glass monolith throws a big shadow (don't get Walter Cronkite started), but that name reels in the buyers, and units are selling fast. A smaller, more nuanced building is going up at 931 First Avenue, at 51st Street, above an old public school. A few more blockbuster buildings, behind Bridge Tower, are on the drawing boards. CHRISTOPHER BONANOS

Murray Hill

The boom took a while to get around to Murray Hill—maybe, like a lot of New Yorkers, it wasn't sure exactly where the Murray Hill was. "It was kind of an old-ladies-who-shopped-at-Altman's neighborhood," says William B. May broker Jane Goldberg. "A lot of garment-center people." But no real-estate secret stays hidden for long. "In 1998, everyone jumped on the bandwagon," says Eleanore Case, a vice-president at Prudential MLB Kaye. Since then, prices have roughly doubled. The new W Hotel Tuscany, at 39th between Park and Lex, along with several new restaurants have even added a touch of trendiness. "It's become much more known, and there are young people," says Goldberg. "People realize how convenient it is."

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$145K–$175K	$325K–$365K
2 BR	$295K–$375K	$400K–$800K
Townhouse	$650K–$1.6M	$1.3M–$3.5M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$700–$2,400	$1,200–$3,000
2 BR	$2,000–$4,200	$2,800–$5,000
3 BR	$4,500–$7,000	$6,500–$10K

STREET NEWS: Manhattan's increase in

Photographed by Sean Hemmerle.

car and truck traffic (about 20 percent in the past decade) has been hard on Murray Hill, since backups for the Queens-Midtown Tunnel spill into the quiet brownstone streets. "Especially on a Friday," notes one broker, "when everyone's going out to the Hamptons." Nonetheless, it is still among the most placid of Manhattan neighborhoods, especially at night. It's also an area built on a human scale, with "a nice mixture of brownstones and high-rises," says Goldberg. "There have been some new developments, but they haven't become eyesores."

MIGRATIONS: Murray Hill now attracts the same affluent young families that also look in Chelsea and even the East Village. And since Murray Hill's apartments tend to be small, there's been a lot of buying-and-combining. The big towers built in the eighties by the river are to a great extent their own community, and since they're condos, they're often investment apartments and pieds-à-terre. ("View buyers," sniffs one broker.)

PROGNOSIS: "The market hasn't leveled off for properties that are well valued and in good condition," says William B. May broker Paula Schott. "We just had a place go into contract—we had to raise the price after the first offers." Agrees Goldberg, "There's a scarcity of property." C.B.

Gramercy Park and Union Square

What was once a Dunkin' Donuts at 220 Park Avenue South is now Gavin Citron's *très* fabu Aleutia, where birchwood-smoked venison loin with pistachio ragout is served up for $32 a plate. That's the way things have gone everywhere around Gramercy Park and Union Square in recent years. From the soaring One Union Square South—with its impossible-to-read steaming clock, its Virgin Megastore, and its pricey rentals, to Gramercy Park, where Richard Tyler's house recently sold for $16.5 million, this once-forgotten area perfectly situated between downtown and uptown has been remembered in a big way.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$145K-$250K	$300K-$425K
2 BR	$200K-$500K	$600K-$995K
Brownstone	$1M-$4M	$2M-$16M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$850-$1,200	$1,800-$3,000
2 BR	$1,450-$2,500	$2,800-$4,200
3 BR	$3,000-$5,000	$4,000-$12K

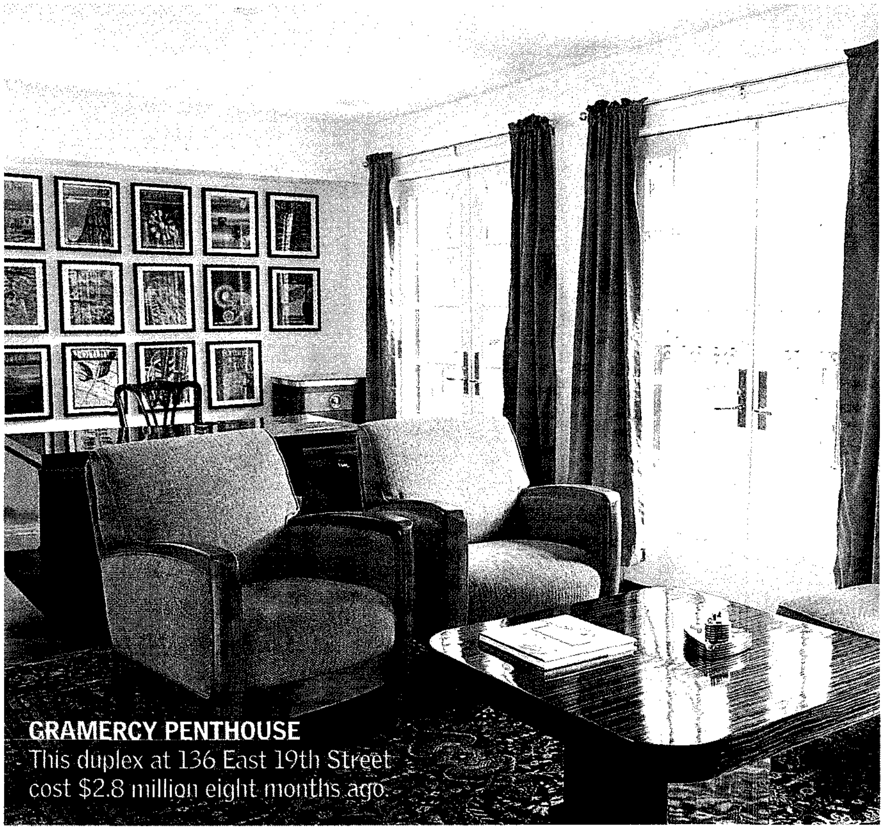
STREET LIFE: Community Board 5 chairman Kyle Merker warns that some of the charm that helped attract interest in the Union Square area has been paved over. "Mom's Cigars is gone. Eureka Joe's Coffee is gone," Merker says. "The rents have gone out of control. Landlords are not renewing leases, with the hopes of getting those higher rents."

CREATURE COMFORTS: The opening of Barnes & Noble on East 17th Street in November 1995 signaled the start of a major retail-improvement boom. The apparently endless renovation of the subway station and Union Square Park is almost complete. And the farmer's market has flourished, bringing huge, crisp apples, fresh greens, and all sorts of other produce to grateful hordes. Bid farewell to the old 14th Street—Bradlees, the bankrupt discount chain, is vacating its prime Union Square South roost. One rumored replacement tenant is H&M.

TIPPING POINT: Locals say the crowning moment of the area's revival was the opening in November 2000 of the W New York hotel at 541 Lexington Avenue. "The area was underserved in terms of high-end hotel rooms, and they absolutely bring a lot of class to the area," says resident and real-estate broker Emily Tannen of AJ Clarke.

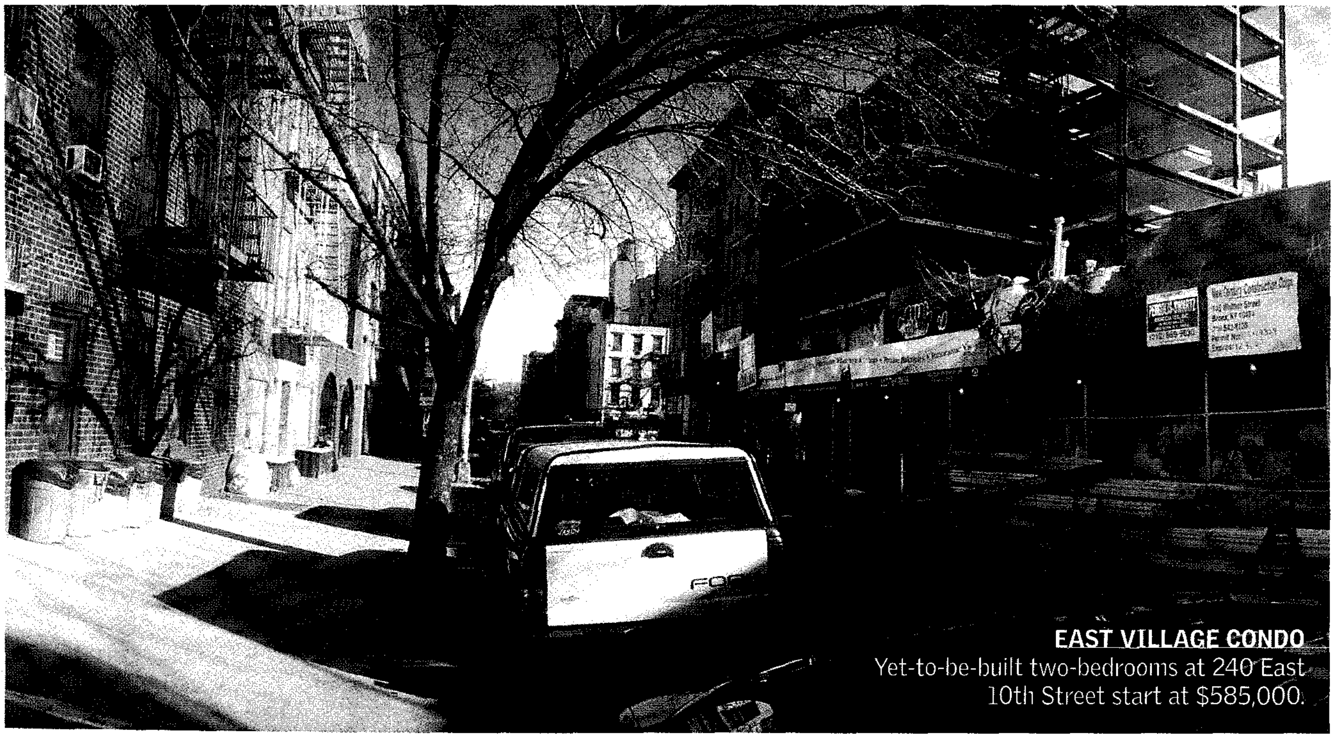
WHAT'S NEW: At 136 East 19th Street (on the stretch off the park called "Block Beautiful"), a brownstone was converted to six high-end condos, a small but typical project. On a grander scale, One Union Square South brought 154 prime rental units, and fourteen stadium-seating movie screens, to the 'hood. An infamous 1989 ConEdison explosion outside 32 Gramercy Park South was a low point for the area, but in the past five years, there have been 35 sales in the building, says Corcoran broker Chris Leavitt. On 14th Street, NYU has built new dormitory towers where the Palladium disco once was, bringing thousands of college kids.

PROGNOSIS: It's hard to imagine how any neighborhood can support what seems like three new sushi restaurants a block, but places with unique raw-fish stylings like Sushi Samba are busy. The only direction possible for residential growth is east along 14th Street and a few pockets between First and Second Avenues. Expect it. And say farewell to the funky downmarket stores on Park Avenue South. Like Dunkin' Donuts, they'll vanish as their leases expire. ALLEN SALKIN



GRAMERCY PENTHOUSE
This duplex at 136 East 19th Street cost $2.8 million eight months ago.

Photographed by Carina Salvi.



EAST VILLAGE CONDO
Yet-to-be-built two-bedrooms at 240 East 10th Street start at $585,000.

East Village

The East Village continues to grow up and settle down—Tompkins Square Park is full of strollers and dogs, and shops peddling wedding gowns and sleek housewares have popped up alongside the piercing parlors and record stores. "The area has matured; it's less transient. A lot of people with kids," observes Corcoran's Glenn Schiller. The rental tenements that once housed students and non-yuppies have been replaced by better-capitalized people looking to buy their places. "A lot of people who already own are buying adjacent apartments," says Schiller. "We convinced a developer to turn one of his rentals into a condo," says Andy Gerringer of Douglas Elliman, "and we sold it in three weeks. The demand in the area was so great, we could raise prices in what people say is a slow market."

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$130K-$210K	$350K-$450K
2 BR	$200K-$280K	$550K-$850K
Loft	$500K-$600K	$900K-$1.1M
Brownstone	$400K-$500K	$1.8M-$2.2M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1.2K-1.6K	$1.9K-$2.8K
2 BR	$2K-$2.8K	$3.8K-$4.1K
3 BR/Loft	$3.5K-$5.5K	$5.5K-$7.5K

STREET LIFE: The East Village bar-restaurant pandemic seems to be finally under control—the community board doesn't make it very easy to get a liquor license, which could help explain why some of the older downscale places, like roach-flecked Leshko's, have gone all *Wallpaper*-y and slick. With the squatters and drug dealers gone, the place has become a sanitized rec zone for the twentysomething population of the whole city. It's also home to a stretch of gay bars that rivals Eighth Avenue's.

TIPPING POINT: The renovation of Tompkins Square, the condo-ization of the Christadora House on the park at 9th Street, and the construction of the hip-but-fancy Red Square complex on East Houston all came at the height of the last boom. Gentrification was beaten back for a while, but with the purging of Alphabet City squatters and drug dealers, even Avenue C stopped feeling risky and started being a good place for people who pay their rent on time to raise a little hell and eat Brazilian food.

WHAT'S NEW: Despite being next door to a halfway house and across the street from the projects, 280 East Houston near Avenue C, a rental so bourgeois it has its own gym, filled up within months of opening in 1998. "It prompted a whole bunch of smaller developers to buy up the area," says Lake Shaw of Citi-Habitats. A rash of boxy, orange-brick apartment houses have replaced the neighborhood's many vacant lots, community gardens, and makeshift parking spaces—vestiges of a time when it made more sense to just let a tenement burn down than to pay taxes on it. Everyone agrees that the new places are pretty yucky-looking, as if they'd been carved out of cinder block. But so far, at least there aren't any high-rises.

PROGNOSIS: Bigger projects to come. As Shaw says, "Downtown is heavily protected by zoning against high-rise development—and the East Village is going to be the first place where they'll break those rules." LISSA T. RODGERS

NoLIta and NoHo

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$165K-$325K	$425K-$680K
2 BR	$200K-$385K	$520K-$750K
Loft	$550K-$2M	$990K-$6M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1,400-$2,100	$1,750-$4,200
2 BR	$2,200-$5,000	$3,800-$7,500
3 BR/Loft	$5,000-$8,000	$6,500-$19K

Five years ago, NoLIta didn't exist, so flush dot-commers invented it. Now prices in the boutique-infested, low-rise neighborhood are among the highest in the city, higher even than those of its almost-as-recently-conceived neighbor to the north, NoHo. So high that the developers of a twenty-loft conversion at 161 Grand Street are trying to glom onto the goodness by adver-

Photographed by Kristine Larsen.

tising their building near Centre Street as belonging to "SoLIta." So high that another developer is in the midst of conquering the neighborhood's once-insurmountable eastern barrier, putting up a new, glass-fronted, full-service apartment building at 199 Bowery. Welcome to ELIta.

STREET LIFE: While NoHo has maintained its quiet, "old-tyme" SoHo feel—even as it's gained new eateries like Bond Street, Five Points, and Serafina Pizza—NoLIta has almost completely shed its Little Italy past. Now tiny clothing boutiques with iMacs as cash registers and chic coffee spots like Cafe Gitane and Cafe Habana give the area the feel of a high-tech nineteenth-century arrondissement. There are still quite a few rent-controlled old-timers who refuse to call the place NoLIta and probably still go to Mass at Old St. Patrick's Cathedral, but their voices are overwhelmed by the pleasant din of a neighborhood bristling with young money.

TIPPING POINT: Apparently 285 Lafayette changed everything. "That was the beginning of NoLIta," said Douglas Elliman's Helene Luchnick. An old factory building was gutted and then crowned with a wedding cake of penthouses, creating homes for the likes of David Bowie and Ian Schrager. Rather than advertising the building as near SoHo, they used NoLIta as a selling point, and it worked, big-time.

WHAT'S NEW: The main event of the new NoHo century is under way at the old Carl Fischer building in Cooper Square, where unfinished lofts will go for as much as $6 million. Although the development is less than a block from St. Marks Place, "it's landmarked NoHo," insists area vet Mary Ellen Cashman of Stribling and Associates. The parking lot next door is slated to become a Rem Koolhaas-designed hotel.

PROGNOSIS: In the event of a slump, the hideous rental building at 284 Mott Street may be the first to suffer. It fronts on East Houston Street and has fetched high rents for bland, small apartments because it opened in the mid-nineties, just as the area's hipness was beginning to blossom. The area's location between Greenwich Village, the East Village, the Lower East Side, and SoHo makes it likely that the few remaining patches of land there will be developed, creating a seamless (if possibly charmless) Village. A.S.

NOLITA CONDO
It costs $2.25 million: 285 Lafayette, between David Bowie and Ian Schrager.

SoHo and Lower West Side

What happened to SoHo? "The Guggenheim became Prada," says Corcoran broker Judi Harvest. "I mean, what else can you say?" Of course, the Guggenheim itself arrived long after the original wave of illegal homesteaders in the seventies who were looking for space to make large-format art. Their greatest legacy was probably the invention of the Loft—a whole new mode of living in which dangling sprinklers, brushed concrete, and exposed plywood seams became chic. Today, the neighborhood is so overrun with high-end retail where galleries and arts groups once thrived that it's a bit like living inside the Short Hills Mall—only everybody's speaking French or Japanese.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$350K-$480K	$720K-$850K
2 BR	$600K-$800K	$1.16M-$1.75M
3 BR	$1M-$1.2M	$1.75M-$3M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$2,500-$3,500	$4,000-$5,000
2 BR	$3,500-$5,000	$5,500-$10K
3 BR	$7,000-$10K	$12K-$20K

TIPPING POINT: "The big retail boom brought a new cachet to SoHo, which is what caused residential prices to surge," says William B. May's Edward C. Ferris. But in terms of apartment life, things moved very quickly from the eerie streetscape of *After Hours* to the bustling mini-mall it's become.

MIGRATIONS: SoHo day-trippers once hoped to spot scruffy artists on their way home from Pearl Paint. Now the neighborhood has given way to Range Rovers, investment bankers, and moguls like Rupert Murdoch, who's living out his late-midlife-crisis in a penthouse on Prince Street. The city has an artists-in-residence restriction still in effect to preserve SoHo as an artistic neighborhood, "but no one enforces it," says Ferris. "If they did, at least 50 percent of the new residents would have to be kicked out." (Claire Danes and Matt Damon needn't worry.)

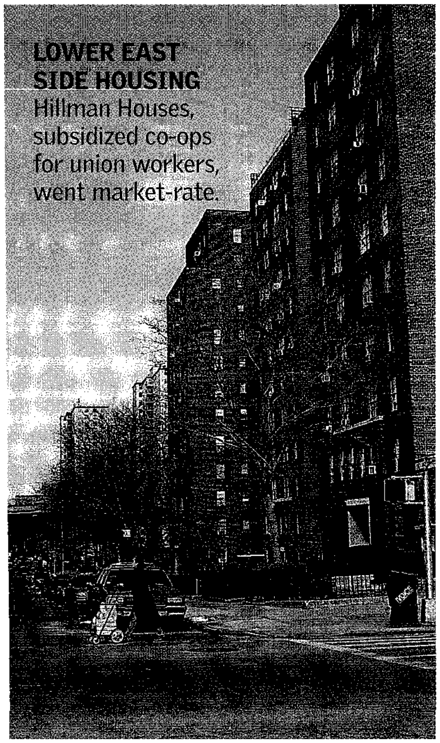
WHAT'S NEW: The New Museum Buildings at 158 Mercer Street and 30 Crosby Street have been converted into

Photographed by Eric McNatt.

condos. Unlike earlier conversions, these aren't raw spaces but ready-to-inhabit homes with amenities like stainless-steel kitchens, wine cellars, and concierges. "This is a faster time," says Harvest. "Nobody wants to buy a place for $2 million, then have to pay a designer another $2 million, and *then* wait two years to move in." Not long ago, 30 Crosby Street, between Broome and Grand Streets, was considered marginal. "No one would have spent that kind of money"—$2 to $7 million—"to live on Crosby and Grand a few years back," says Stribling broker Steven Hauser. "Now Lenny Kravitz lives there."

STREET LIFE: "Some people who bought places five or ten years ago are now complaining," says Hauser. "They say the streets are so crowded with weekend shoppers that they can't even walk outside." Which is why many people with a loft jones have begun choosing TriBeCa. "The only reason to have a loft in SoHo is if you have a country house," says broker Susan Penzner. "No one who lives in SoHo is there on the weekends."

PROGNOSIS: Assuming the city doesn't lose its voracious appetite for luxury retail and overdesigned restaurants, expect it to become even more crowded. On the other hand, brokers recall that a less-established SoHo lost more value than most areas in the last recession. D.A.


LOWER EAST SIDE HOUSING Hillman Houses, subsidized co-ops for union workers, went market-rate.

Lower East Side

Gentrification, a process that took SoHo the better part of two decades, hit the Lower East Side with all the speed and subtlety of a neutron bomb. Orchard Street's fabric-swatch and cheap-suit emporiums have been replaced by mod hair salons and "members only" techno bars. Clinton Street, once crowded with squabbling, semi-violent drug dealers, is now home to 71 Clinton Fresh Food, where it's impossible to get a table. As a result, real-estate prices in the area have doubled in the past five years—not just for swanky lofts but also for crumbling tenements with bathtubs in the kitchen. As one recent emigrant to Brooklyn puts it, "I lived in lower Manhattan for ten years while I went to college and waitressed. Now that I make a good salary, enough money to buy a house elsewhere, I can't afford even the tiniest Lower East Side apartment."

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$48K-$120K	$150K-$265K
2 BR	$135K-$400K	$329K-$799K
3 BR	$400K-$625K	$449K-$1.1M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$700-$1,400	$1,600-$2,100
2 BR	$1,000-$2,000	$2,000-$2,300
3 BR	$2,000-$4,100	$3,850-$5,600

STREET LIFE: The punk-bohos who invaded a dozen years ago have been succeeded by professionals who can't quite afford SoHo or TriBeCa and are following the edgy designers and cafés east. The cognitive dissonance can be striking. Asks one landlord: "A guy making that much money, what does he want to live on Suffolk Street for?" Jacob Goldman at LoHo Realty describes them as "people who don't want to be called yuppies but are yuppies anyway."

CREATURE COMFORTS: You don't move here for the good schools but for the nightlife at rec-room-themed bars, French bistros, and clubs like Tonic and the Mercury Lounge. Still, there's a dearth of dry cleaners and supermarkets.

TIPPING POINT: Some say a 1997 New York *Times* feature that touted the neighborhood as "the new bohemia" was the Lower East Side's watershed moment. But with shopping complexes, hotels, and luxury high-rises all currently proposed for areas along Delancey and East Houston, it may be that the crowning symbol of the Lower East Side's rebirth is yet to come.

WHAT'S NEW: Four years ago, the tenants at the Grand Street Co-ops voted themselves shareholders, removed the price caps, and are now able to sell their apartments at market rates—potentially making over 4,500 units available. Elsewhere in the neighborhood, developers have created luxury lofts from plumbing-supply houses like the Davis & Warshaw building or piled them atop storefronts that still wholesale fake fur jackets, like 130 Orchard Street.

PROGNOSIS: Some see the transformation as inevitable. As Douglas Elliman's Andy Gerringer says, "We've seen it in Chelsea, we've seen it in SoHo, and now it's the Lower East Side." Of course, young people newly slackerized by the dot-com bust may not be so willing, or able, to pay these prices anymore. LISSA T. RODGERS

Lower Manhattan

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$175K-$255K	$300K-$410K
2 BR	$300K-$365K	$425K-$550K
3 BR	$375K-$425K	$600K-$625K

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$1.5K-$2K	$1.8K-$2.6K
2 BR	$2.2K-$2.7K	$3K-$3.3K
3 BR	$3K-$3.5K	$4.7K-$5.2K

Since 1995, the number of people actually living in the area where Manhattan was originally settled has swelled by over 60 percent, with 8,000 new apartments to house them in. Back when office rents were lagging downtown, the financial district was hyped as the next hot neighborhood, and empty office buildings were proffered as quirky and semi-affordable new places to live. Five years later, the first residential conversion in the financial district, at 45 Wall Street, is being torn down to make room for the new New York Stock Exchange building. And for those who actually moved to the area, it's still next to impossible to rent a video. The South Street Seaport area is at least near the Fulton Street shopping district, even if it's mostly geared to the Wall Street workers' day-

Photographed by Sean Hemmerle.

LOWER MANHATTAN RENTAL
$3,775 one bedrooms at One West Street.

time needs. But things are perfectly friendly in the fussy, surburbanish archipelago of Battery Park City.

WHAT'S NEW: Rentals. The Renaissance at 100 John Street was "the first really nicely done building in the financial district," says Bob Scaglion of Citi-Habitats. "For the first time, people started coming down and saying, 'Wow, I can get a beautiful apartment here for a lot less than I would uptown.' " It inspired a slew of imitators, spurred by aggressive tax incentives for residential conversions offered under Mayor Giuliani's revitalization program. Le Revage at 21 West Street, a 1932 Art Deco building converted into 293 units, is classy; the Ocean, at 1 West Street, is flashy, with a lobby ceiling copied from the Bellagio in Vegas. Unusually for the area, 200 Water Street, which is near the Seaport, was built new.

STREET LIFE: "There's no crime!," says Scaglion. "I hate to say there's no poverty, but there just isn't. There's no public housing, nothing like that." Crime statistics place Lower Manhattan at the bottom of the blotter citywide. The Downtown Alliance has 120 red-suited "goodwill ambassadors" who clean and patrol the area. The financial district has never been an easy place to buy toilet paper and other essentials, but you can now find farm-fresh arugula at the Amish Market on Washington Street. Battery Park City now has three competing supermarkets and a sixteen-screen movie theater.

MIGRATIONS: The last influx of new arrivals below Chambers Street spoke Dutch. Today, it's populated mostly by affluent workaholic singles and couples who want to live as close as possible to their jobs. According to a survey by the Downtown Alliance, 88 percent are under 45, with 76 percent making over $90,000 a year. One in four households rakes in over $210,000, but less than 10 percent have children under 18.

PROGNOSIS: During the boom, Lower Manhattan lost its 20 percent discount. Prices hit near–Upper West Side levels before slipping this winter. Over 2,500 units are coming soon, and Battery Park City is nearing completion. Whether that means "critical mass" or "glut" remains to be seen. CHRISTOPHER TENNANT

TriBeCa

By the late eighties, TriBeCa's warehouse lofts were the last word in artsy, post-industrial cool. Things declined a bit in the last Bush recession, but a built-out SoHo and the increasing popularity of lofts spurred a wave of new conversions that has rid the district of anything resembling its manufacturing roots. Today, it remains the most overhyped trapezoid of real estate in America—home to Harvey Keitel, the Coen brothers, and Mariah Carey—the world capital of high-end hip. Since 1996, "Prices have doubled, tripled, and even quadrupled in some buildings," says Douglas Elliman's Helene Luchnick, who's beat the drum to get the uptown rich to move into high-ceilinged former textile warehouses.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$400K-$560K	$669K-1.2M
2 BR	$600K-$900K	$1.2M-$1.8M
3 BR	$900K-$1M	$2.2M-$6.9M

Rentals	1996	2001
1 BR	$1,300-$2,500	$2,300-$4,000
2 BR	$2,600-$3,000	$3,600-$11K
3 BR	$3,800-$5,000	$5,500-$15K

STREET LIFE: "It's safe, it has great parks, great schools, and not a lot of the phony and pretentious attitude we wanted to get away from," says Maribeth Maloney, who fled the Upper East Side in 1998. "If you look at the way people dress, the way they dress their children, the types of birthday parties their kids have, it's just more . . . *fun*." Not that it's easy to live in the middle of a neighborhood that's being violently rebuilt around you. "When you have this kind of construction, there's a huge amount of debris," complains longtime resident Eric Bogosian, the performance artist. "It all gets put into containers that have to be winched up into the back of trucks in the middle of the night."

CREATURE COMFORTS: Duane and Franklin are now lined with pricey, and usually empty, design stores. Eating out is not a problem, what with Nobu, Odeon, Bouley Bakery, and a dozen other destination eateries to choose from. Meanwhile, residents yearn for heirloom tomatoes to simmer on their Viking ranges: "Where's the Dean & Deluca?" demands William B. May's Iris Dauber. "There is a Food Emporium," but it's "kind of gross." "If you're resourceful you can get what you need," says Maloney. Of course, it's hard to tell someone who just spent $3 million on a gutted loft that they're pio-

Photographed by Kristine Larsen.

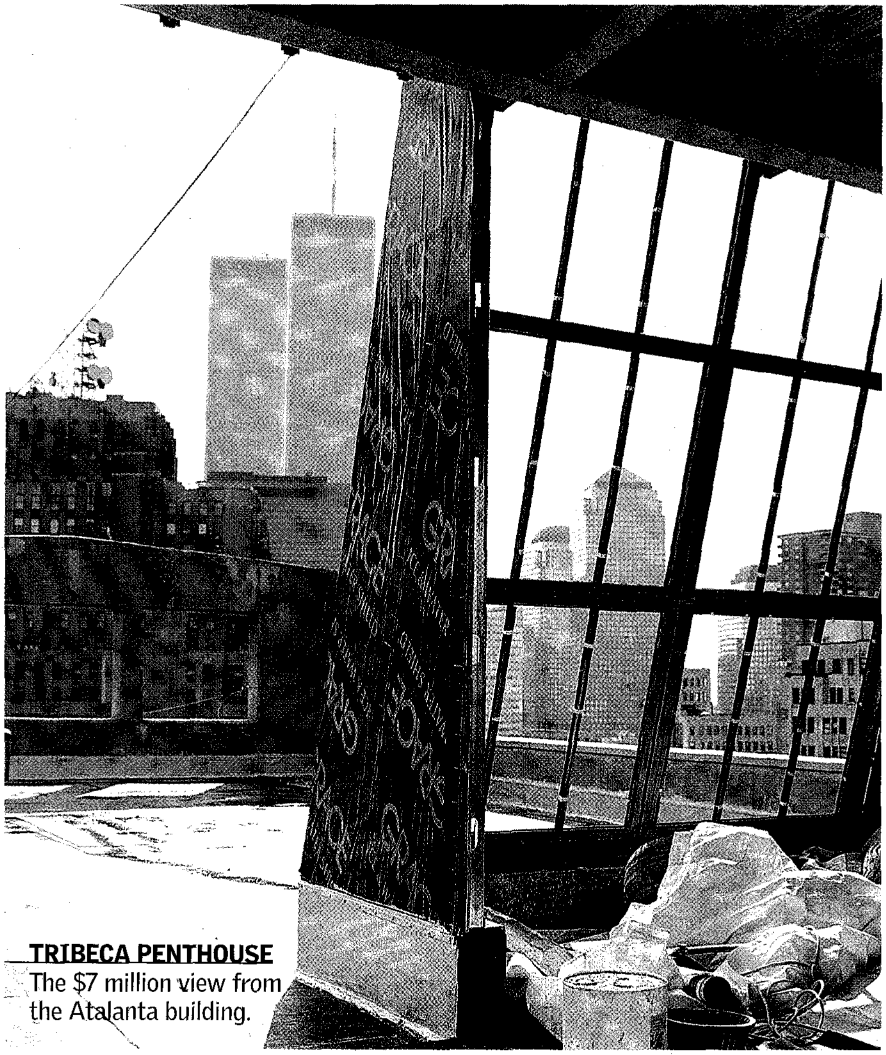
neering here. On the other hand, the lack of street bustle is its own reward.

MIGRATIONS: Mariah aside, TriBeCa is peopled mostly by professionals in their "forties and up, people who wouldn't even dare come into the neighborhood five years ago," says Dauber, "and a lot of families, because of P.S. 234." And uptown refugees like Maloney, a 38-year-old lawyer turned stay-at-home mom who lives with her husband, a maxillofacial surgeon, in a 4,000 square-feet Murray Street loft. "Our children ride their bikes through our living room, we have a trampoline—you just can't get that uptown," says Maloney, whose children attend one of TriBeCa's four pre-schools (all of which have waiting lists).

TIPPING POINTS: Robert DeNiro's TriBeCa Film Center dates from the last boom—1989. More recently, having a sainted president's princely offspring move in certainly didn't hurt the neighborhood's profile. But mostly, for whatever reason, it became fashionable for a good chunk of the well-off to live in a loft rather than in an Upper East Side high-rise.

WHAT'S NEW: In 1996, construction started on the 29-unit Dietz Lantern building at 429 Greenwich Street, the first full-service luxury conversion since 1982. "It was the first building to have a doorman and really started the new wave of luxury renovation," says Luchnick. This year, a seventeen-story, windowless, refrigerated-storage facility became the Atalanta at 25 North Moore.

PROGNOSIS: For the most part, everything's converted, and developers are moving east to old office buildings around City Hall Park and into the North-West corridor, west of Hudson street, where some vacant space still lingers unmarketed. C.T.



TRIBECA PENTHOUSE
The $7 million view from the Atalanta building.

Astoria and Long Island City

Who's moving to Astoria? The answer used to be Greeks, Italians, Yugoslavians, Arabs, Moroccans, Colombians, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans. "They don't come anymore," says Steve Valiotis, the owner of Alma Realty. "Astoria now gets the overflow from Manhattan." L.I.C., on the other hand, is a story of dreams deferred. In the past few years, dot-com mania drove the conversion of industrial buildings into office space, and illegal live-work lofts quietly multiplied, with artists moving over to live near the expanded P.S. 1 art museum, which was revamped two years ago and now draws crowds for events like the summer D.J. series. But the late-eighties gambit of placing a huge glass Citicorp skyscraper over the E-train stop didn't make it any less of a low-rise warehouseland. Somehow, "Cyber City" and "NewHo" never materialized.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$40K-$60K	$90K-$120K
2 BR	$65K-$90K	$140K-$200K
Townhouse	$275K-$425K	$350K-$700K

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$600-$750	$1,000-$1,500
2 BR	$700-$850	$1,500-$1,800
4 BR	$1,000-$1,500	$2,000-$2,200

STREET SCENE: *The Sopranos* and *Sex and the City* were born at L.I.C.'s Silvercup Studios, and if studio head Stuart Suna has his way, Queens will become Hollywood East. Silvercup nearly doubled in size in 1999 and plans to expand even more. "Every day you see somebody," says Ted Kouris, owner of Metropolis International Realty. "You see Woody Allen, you see Al Pacino, you see Robert DeNiro. Most people don't recognize them because they're all immigrants. Pacino could walk around and no one would recognize him."

CREATURE COMFORTS: Omonia Cafe and Cafe Kolonaki are still palpably Greek, and at the new Felfela Cafe you'll find long rows of Arab men smoking electric-blue hookahs. While there are some new establishments, like Mezzo Mezzo and Trattoria L'incontro, until the newcomers from across the river begin to shop and play where they sleep, Astoria will preserve its sharp ethnic flavors. The pulse of life in L.I.C. remains faint—there are a few cafés, galleries, and restaurants—but overall, "services have not kept

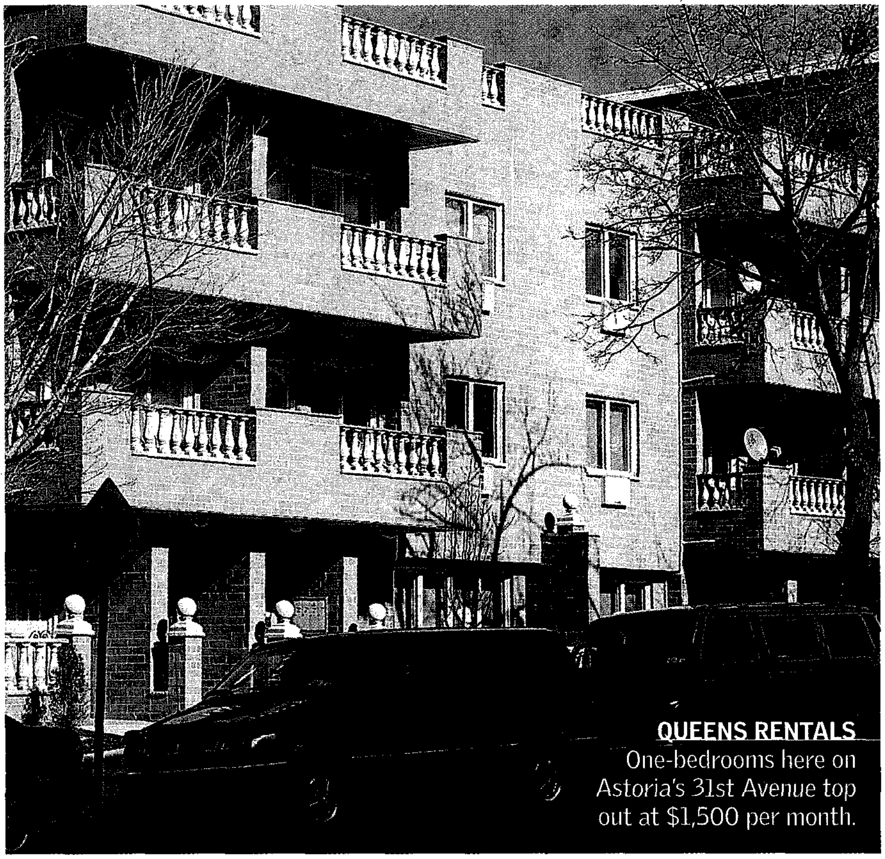
Photographed by Eric McNatt.

pace with the changes in the market," says Jeffrey A. Bernstein, at Insignia/ESG. "It's kind of a cart-and-horse problem: What comes first?"

WHAT'S NEW: Architecturally, Astoria notably lacks grace, and the new homes at 31st Avenue and 29th Street—with their ersatz balusters, roof terraces, and Italian granite staircases—are no exception. But where else can you land a one-bedroom penthouse for $1,500 a month? Queens West, the 74-acre waterfront development across from the United Nations, lay fallow for almost two decades until the mammoth—if still somewhat isolated—42-story Citylights condo slab finally opened. Prices range from $90,000 for a studio to $200,000 for a two-bedroom.

PROGNOSIS: Will the softening economy stop the eastward migration? More Manhattanites will get to check out the area when MOMA temporarily moves its collections to the old Swingline factory in L.I.C. next year. "It's ten minutes away, and it's just sitting there," says Bernstein, who remains optimistic. "New York City is very unusual in that the river has been such an impediment to development." And five years from now? Think London, Berlin, Paris: A river runs through each and every one.

ERIKA KINETZ



QUEENS RENTALS
One-bedrooms here on Astoria's 31st Avenue top out at $1,500 per month.

Carroll Gardens and Boerum Hill

Not long ago, a stroll down Smith Street meant contending with caving sidewalks, dusty bodegas, and a lot of empty storefronts. "It was like Beirut," says a longtime local. These days, expect stroller gridlock, restaurants that serve *tart tatin,* and haute hippie boutiques. "The hype gets pretty out of control," says novelist and relative newcomer Joanna Hershon, who just saw her neighborhood in a travel magazine. "They made it look like Paris!"

THE NUMBERS

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$50K-$225K	$170K-$300K
2 BR	$150K-$300K	$250K-$525K
Brownstone	$200K-$700K	$600K-$1.3M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$700-$1,100	$1,200-$1,800
2 BR	$1,100-$1,600	$1,800-$2,500
3 BR	$1,600-$1,900	$2,400-$3,500

STREET LIFE: Carroll Gardens' blocks of brownstones, some with actual gardens in front, finally caught the eyes of Manhattanites, filling the gentrification gap between the Heights and Park Slope. Smith Street has become the standard by which other recovering commercial streets (Fifth Avenue, De Kalb) are judged. The speed of its revival has entrepreneurs imagining buried treasure behind every rolled-down storefront. The brasserie needs of the new population are now met with places like Grocery, Mignon, and Banania crowding the traditional dining infrastructure of fake-brick Italian palaces like Marco Polo. Boerum Hill, which has a large public-housing presence, has been slower in remaking itself, though the prostitution problem has been largely curtailed. "There are still a couple side streets where you're careful of showing apartments after dusk," says one broker.

MIGRATIONS: Graying Italian men still patrol the streets of Carroll Gardens—"They'll be here until they die," says one broker. In Boerum Hill, development is rapidly displacing the old-timers. Notwithstanding a few tenacious "members only" Latino clubs on Smith, Marilyn A. Donahue's Allan Gerovitz says that "unfortunately, the Dominican population has really shrunk." Newcomers are now paying more than $700,000 for historic townhouses on Wyckoff Street that couldn't fetch $300,000 five years ago. You can almost walk clear to Park Slope without passing a single bombed-out shell. "The boundaries are fusing," says Roslyn Huebener of Aguayo & Huebener. "There are no more demilitarized zones."

WHAT'S NEW: Bergen Street between Court and Smith is completing its transformation from light industry to luxe living. At 25 Bergen Street, the Ic-co Cheese warehouse has become the Westcott, a fifteen-unit condo topped by a three-bedroom penthouse with 360-degree views (asking: $925,000). "It's going to bring a lot of newcomers to the neighborhood with a higher disposable income," says Corcoran's Steven Gerber. "There'll be even more reason for these hip stores and restaurants to be in existence."

PROGNOSIS: The scarcity of housing and the proximity to industrial wastelands in the southern reaches of Carroll Gardens make expansion there unlikely in a recession, but fixer-uppers are still a bargain down to West 9th Street—and farther in Boerum Hill, all the way east to the artsy fringe of Park Slope. Carroll Gardens near the subway and Smith Street proper should hold its value, as will the Boerum Hill historic district.

BORIS KACHKA

Photographed by Carina Salvi.

Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill

The Heights has never really been an *outer-borough* neighborhood. But whatever stigma there may have been was wiped away. The Court Street and Atlantic Avenue commercial nexus went from urban no-man's-land to mini-mall, leaving families even less inclined to move away from the neighborhood. "If my wife is coming home late at night from Borough Hall, it no longer feels like a dangerous, desolate stretch," says lawyer Jonathan Rosenberg. Scarcity of product fed the sellers' market, and prices began to approach Upper East Side levels. Three years ago, a two-bedroom, two-bath co-op at 48 Remsen Street—a brick-faced, five-story townhouse just off the Promenade—sold for $400,000. Last month, it sold for $780,000. Because there has been little new development, priced-out buyers have had to content themselves with Boerum Hill or Carroll Gardens.

THE NUMBERS:

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS/COBBLE HILL

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$80K-$100K	$225K-$300K
2 BR	$150K-$200K	$400K-$500K
3 BR	$400 K-$675K	$780K-$1.3M
Brownstone	$1.1M-$1.4M	$1.9M-$3M

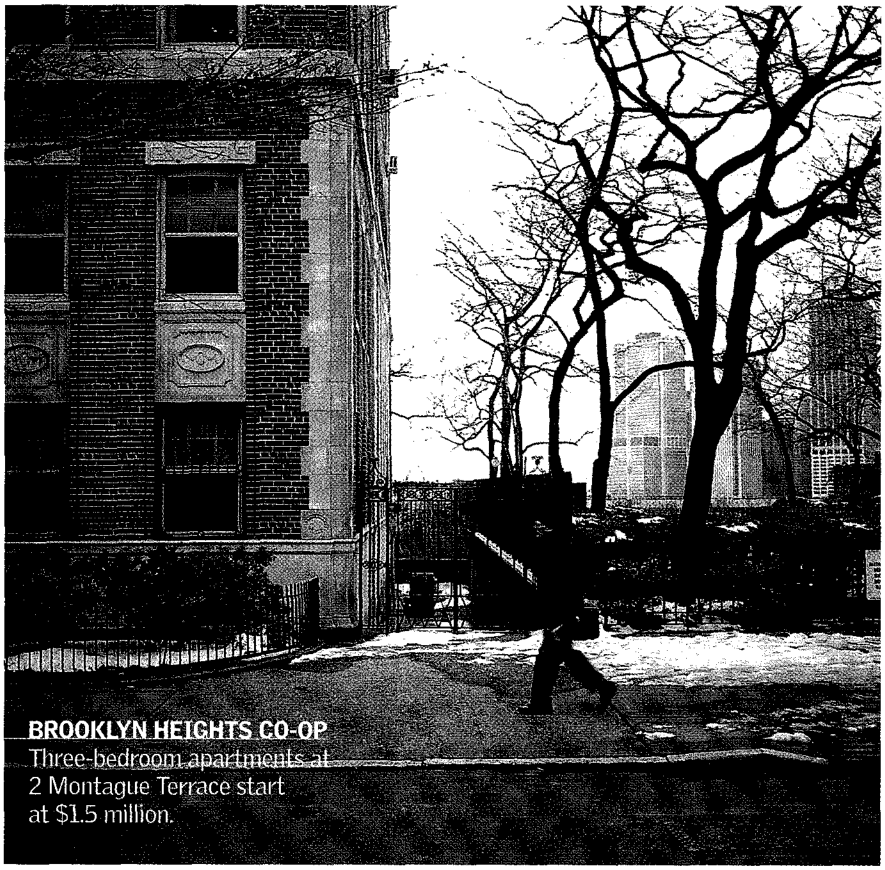
Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$850-$1,100	$1,300-$1,400
2 BR	$1,600-$2,600	$2,500-$4,000
3 BR	$2,500-$4,000	$4,500-$7,000

CREATURE COMFORTS: While most are thrilled with the commercial facelift, skyrocketing rents have edged out a few neighborhood institutions. Faced with a 77 percent rent increase, Peter's Ice Cream on Atlantic Avenue will close this month after twenty years. "It's outrageous," says owner-manager Chris Cowan. Gone, too, are the abandoned triple-X theater and bombed-out storefronts that once blighted northern Court Street, replaced by deep-pocketed national chains like Barnes & Noble, Ben & Jerry's, CVS, and a Regal multiplex (rather than compete, the Cobble Hill Cinema became art-house). Farther down in Cobble Hill, old men still keep watch from their lawn chairs over a vibrant mix of fish stores, butchers, bakeries, and delis. A 71-acre waterfront park planned for the foot of the Brooklyn Bridge has Joralemon Street residents in a panic at the thought of hordes of day-trippers parading down their manicured blocks.

MIGRATIONS: When William B. May sold a brownstone on Wyckoff Street in Cobble Hill for $675,000 in 1996, it was a coup. "At that time, you had to drag people kicking and screaming to that block," says William B. May's Chris Thomas. By late last year, a fully restored four-story Federal-era house on Congress Street was selling for just over $2 million. Soon the boom spread to what brokers call "Cobble Hill West," the area cut off by the BQE. "You couldn't *give* property away there," says Thomas. Now two-bedroom condos at 29 Tiffany Place, a converted sandpaper factory, fetch $500,000. "You're no longer thought of as 'You fell off the map.' "

WHAT'S NEW: After a moratorium on SRO conversions was lifted, the last of Brooklyn Heights' many rooming houses was picked off by developers. At 71 Pierrepont Street, a long-vacant SRO was converted into two- and three-bedroom luxury condos in 1995. Another SRO at 170 Hicks Street is now a luxury condo with skyline views and garden apartments.

PROGNOSIS: While demand is still there, prices have begun to plateau. "The market is stabilizing," says broker Kevin Carberry. "It's not pushing through the roof as it had been earlier last year." JOEY HOFFMAN



BROOKLYN HEIGHTS CO-OP
Three-bedroom apartments at 2 Montague Terrace start at $1.5 million.

Industrial Brooklyn

Brooklyn's waterfront docklands, warehouses, and factories have been derelict for years, cut off by grim Robert Moses–era elevated highways from the revitalizing, conventionally cozy brownstone neighborhoods. Most DUMBO, Gowanus, and Red Hook residents have been hardy artists and squatters priced out of the rest of the city. The three neighborhoods share the fact that they weren't built to be residential and only began drawing serious interest in the past year or two. "When I first moved here, I rarely saw an artist," says Richard Van Buren, a sculptor and longtime Red Hook resident. "Now I see them every day, young families too. You see more Volvos."

TIPPING POINTS: In July 1998, developer David Walentas opened the Clocktower at 1 Main Street, a condo conversion that brought the cobblestoned area into mainstream realty specula-

Photographed by Sean Hemmerle.

tion. "We had a sign on the building: DUMBO LOFTS," says Ruth McCoy, who oversaw the sales effort. "I'd get calls from people on the FDR Drive on cell phones." Despite its isolation, DUMBO always had its brick-pile romance. Getting people to live on the banks of the chemically infused Gowanus Canal was harder, but the city took care of that last year when it finally fixed the pump that circulated its sulfurous waters out into the harbor. Brokers began to hawk it as "the Venice of Brooklyn." Red Hook—best known as the brutish setting for *Last Exit to Brooklyn*—is still scented by its garbage-transfer stations but saw its Beard Street Warehouses transformed into artists' studios and a trolley museum.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$40K-$80K	$90K-$650K
2 BR	$125K-$150K	$200K-$1M
3 BR	$165K-$200K	$375K-$1.5M

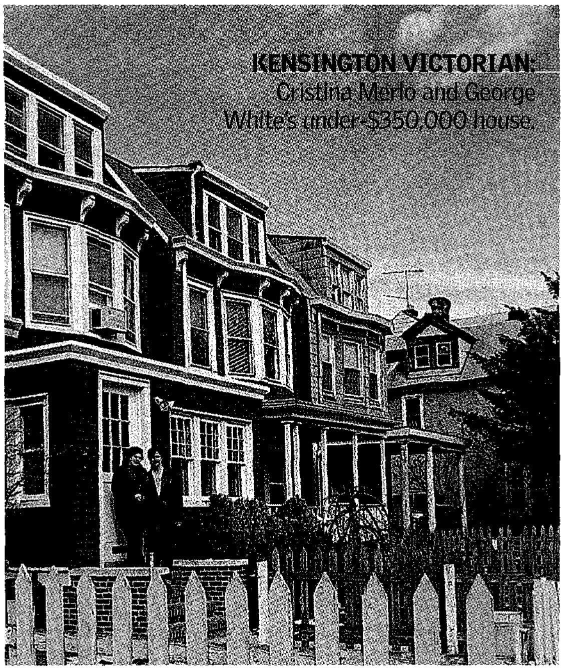
Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$500-$750	$1,000-$2,200
2 BR	$750-$1,200	$1,500-$2,900
3 BR	$1,200-$1,600	$1,650-$3,800

STREET LIFE: "I don't have to get out of bed to watch the boats," says Clocktower resident Ingrid Johnson, who moved from East Harlem and finds it safe. Gowanus sees fewer abandoned cars, and the Department of Sanitation sponsors regular graffiti cleanups. Red Hook's Van Buren loves "all the romantic stuff, foghorns, the Louis Valentino Jr. Pier at end of Coffey Street where folks fish." Still, it's not tamed: "You just have to stay awake without being paranoid. It's not suburbia; there are no sprinklers."

CREATURE COMFORTS: Before gourmet grocer Peas & Pickles arrived, DUMBO residents carpooled to Pathmark across the Manhattan Bridge. "It was like a field trip," says Johnson. Gowanus residents have to walk a few blocks to the bustling fringes of either Carroll Gardens or Park Slope, but they have Costco and Home Depot. Diners on Van Brunt Street, Red Hook's commercial strip, still cater mostly to workers during the day, though there's a bank, a bar, and a drugstore. And they're fighting for a trolley to connect to downtown.

PROGNOSIS: Buyers in DUMBO have the most at stake, but the views, proximity to the Heights, and the size of the apartments should prop up its value. And there's no place for Gowanus and Red Hook to go but up. J.H.

Park Slope



KENSINGTON VICTORIAN: Cristina Merlo and George White's under-$350,000 house.

If Park Slope makes you think of brown-rice living, tree-lined blocks by the park, and Victorian brownstones bought at half the price of most Manhattan apartments, you haven't been out there lately. While $900,000 would have guaranteed a townhouse just off Prospect Park five years ago, today's buyers are paying upwards of $1 million for houses closer to the Gowanus Canal. "The outermost border of desirable Park Slope used to be Seventh Avenue," says Corcoran's Melinda Magnett. "Then it was Sixth Avenue. Now it's Fifth. And Fifth used to be no-man's-land." And the outer-borough discount is long gone. "I used to show apartments on the Upper East Side," says William B. May's Mark Pipes. "And frankly, if you're looking for a studio, I don't see the benefit of getting one out here instead of up there." He pauses: "Except that this neighborhood's nicer."

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$145K-$162K	$175K-$276K
2 BR	$180K-$200K	$300K-$400K
Brownstone	$400K-$500K	$671K-$1.6M

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$900-$1,200	$1,300-$1,800
2 BR	$1,200-$1,300	$2,000-$2,400
3 BR	$2,000-$2,400	$3,000-$3,500

WHAT'S NEW: "Just about every space that can be developed has been developed," says Corcoran's Billy Stephen. Developers are now turning to the few available commercial buildings for conversion. The Union Temple near Grand Army Plaza has put its parking lot on the block. On 12th Street, two former Ansonia Clock Factory buildings have been renovated as condos: The second will be completed this summer, but don't expect to find an apartment there—all but two have been sold (prices started at $530,000).

STREET LIFE: Once the stronghold of moms in Reeboks and Channel Thirteen tote bags, Park Slope now houses its share of Wall Street families. The Slope's newer frontiers, beyond Fifth Avenue and across Flatbush to Prospect Heights, belong to a younger generation. "Seventh Avenue is Park Slope's West Village," says Pipes. "And Fifth Avenue is its East Village."

MIGRATIONS: "It's ironic," muses William B. May's Anna Hamlin. "The people who always made Park Slope such a nice place to live—the teachers and such—now people like them can't afford to live here anymore." The Fifth Avenue Committee, a community housing-advocacy group, is fighting for a "no-displacement zone" in the area, in an attempt to stop the evictions of longtime low-income tenants, many of them minorities.

TIPPING POINT: "In 1995, you saw lots of brownstones on the park sold for $995,000—no one was willing to pay the mansion tax, which starts at $1 million," says Anna Hamlin. "Then, in early 1996, we broke the $1 million barrier." In 2000, the $2 million mark was breached. "Now I'm seeing all sorts of places listed at $2 million or more," says Hamlin. "And it's like, *excuse me?*"

PROGNOSIS: Brokers laugh at the idea of a Seventh Avenue slowdown ("It's more expensive than Montague Street!" exclaims Magnett) and predict that Fifth Avenue prices will at least stay where they are. The newly colonized side streets west of Fifth Avenue are another story, however. "The blocks between Fifth and Fourth . . . I don't know," says Magnett. "I'm not convinced they'll hold." EMILY GITTER

Photographed by Noah Sheldon.

Beyond the Slope

What's next after you can't afford Park Slope? Follow the F train south, around Prospect Park and on toward Coney Island. Even as they become reservoirs for gentrification overflow, these traditionally working-class neighborhoods remain a good deal. "I rented a three-story limestone house to six college graduates in Kensington last year for $3,600," says William B. May's Mark Pipes. "You put that same building in Park Slope and you're talking about a $6,000 setup, easy." These areas may lack bistros, and nightlife that's not an Irish bar full of firemen, but you don't have to travel all the way to Manhattan to find them—Park Slope's just a stop or two away.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$40K-$100K	$60K-$200K
2 BR	$80K-$175K	$200K-$275K
Brownstone	$175K-$250K	$350K-$600K

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$400-$1,100	$750-$1,800
2 BR	$700-$1,500	$1,200-$2,500
3 BR	$2,000-$2,500	$3,200-$3,600

WHAT'S NEW: Several condo apartments at 143 McDonald Avenue that sold at $275 a square foot last summer when they were new have since resold at $345 a square foot. But residents are protective of Windsor Terrace's small-town feel: When the Park Edge Condominiums on Prospect Park Southwest broke ground last year, construction was temporarily halted after neighbors protested.

STREET LIFE: "I *love* it here!" gushes Cristina Merlo, an AOL executive who purchased a three-story, four-bedroom Victorian house in Kensington last year with her husband after renting in Park Slope for seven years. "I actually feel safer than I did in Park Slope," she says. "There's a real sense of neighborhood that I haven't seen anywhere else in the city." The good news is you can have a car out here. The bad news is that you *need* one.

MIGRATIONS: Windsor Terrace has long been Irish and Italian; Kensington is more mixed, with Pakistanis, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Russians, Asians, and Eastern Europeans. These groups are now sharing sidewalks with priced-out Slopers. "Kensington and Windsor Terrace have been very receptive to the new people moving in," insists Huebener. This may be because the influx has been gradual: Many are scared off by the commute and the low-rise residential landscape, which either reminds you of North London or leaves you humming the *All in the Family* theme song.

TIPPING POINT: When potential buyers started peering at the window advertisements of Park Slope's real-estate offices, vainly searching for brownstones for less than $1 million. "I looked in Park Slope for a while, and then I suddenly realized, 'I can buy a very expensive box, or I can buy a house,' " says Merlo.

PROGNOSIS: What happens if there's a recession when you're in a spillover zone? Brokers still remember a Windsor Terrace luxury-condominium project built to some fanfare in the late eighties, which developers were forced to rent out when they couldn't find buyers. But many remain optimistic. "As long as Park Slope prices rise, or even hold steady, more people are going to be coming out here," says Pipes. "Sure, Park Slope's nicer, but it's definitely not $500-a-month nicer." E.G.

Fort Greene and Clinton Hill

Twenty years ago, the Brooklyn Academy of Music was covered with graffiti and the once-gracious neighborhood surrounding it was overshadowed by the nearby housing projects. These days, Fort Greene seems in danger of being overshadowed by the ever-expanding BAM, which now has an art-house multiplex, a café, a trail of related developments (including studios for Mark Morris and Twyla Tharp), and a half-dozen Francophile restaurants close enough for preconcert dining. It was a long time coming. "It took a lot of years to screw up the area and it took a lot of years to bring it back," says resident Jerry Minsky from Corcoran's new Fort Greene office. "But history has repeated itself commercially, residentially, and, finally, on a cultural front."

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$50K-$120K	$150K-$225K
2 BR	$100K-$140K	$155K-$350K
3 BR	$150K-265K	$250K-$500K
Brownstone	$250K-$450K	$500K-$1M

FORT GREENE BROWNSTONE
298 Lafayette Street sold for $749,000 last month.

Photographed by Kristine Larsen.

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$700–$1,000	$1,100–$1,600
2 BR	$800–$1,200	$1,200–$2,000
3 BR	$1,250–$1,800	$2,400–$3,400

MIGRATIONS: Even though its biggest booster, Spike Lee, decamped for the Upper East Side last year (Chris Rock, Rosie Perez, and Wesley Snipes are still here) Fort Greene's self-image as a cultural hotbed hasn't suffered. Certainly many new homeowners still choose Fort Greene because of its racial diversity, not in spite of it. That said, the neighborhood has definitely gotten whiter. Last year, Clinton Hill's first million-dollar brownstone was sold. "I have sold a lot of nicer ones for a lot less," says Minsky, who bought his own eleven years ago, on Vanderbilt Avenue for $350,000. "Now I get doctors from Cobble Hill bidding $975,000 on the same blocks people used to tell me I was a nut for living on."

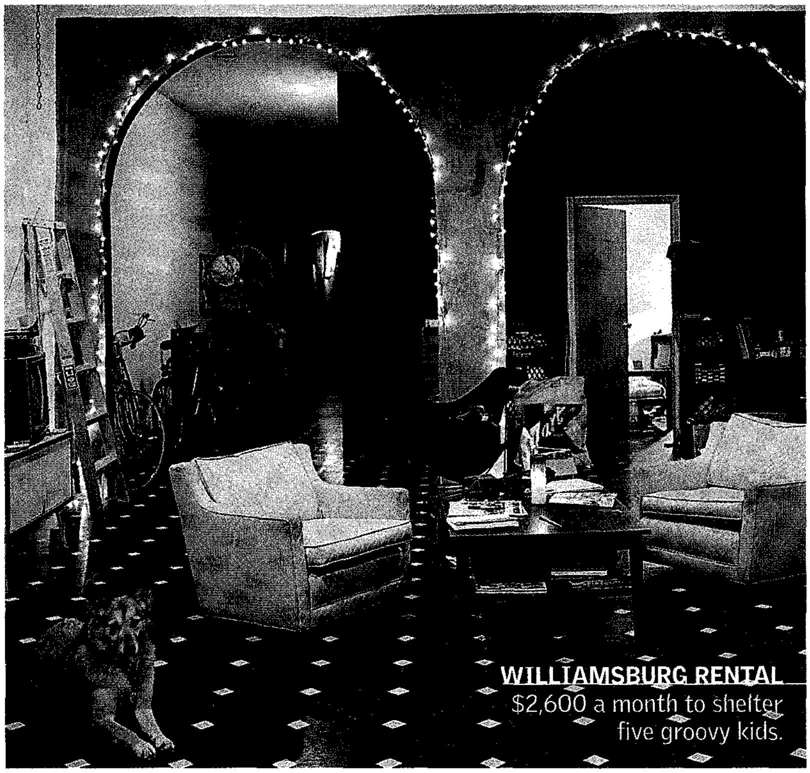
CREATURE COMFORTS: Three years ago, there were few sit-down restaurants along De Kalb's commercial strip; today, there are nearly a dozen. Schools remain spotty, forcing parents to seek out private schools in Brooklyn Heights; and the area still lacks the bakers, butchers, smaller retailers, and quality takeout options most New Yorkers take for granted.

WHAT'S NEW: In 1996, Atlantic Commons replaced rat-infested lots with row after row of neo-brownstones that sold for $336,000 apiece. In Clinton Hill, a terra-cotta mansion at 315 Clinton Avenue, an empty shell three years ago, became full-floor co-ops ($400,000 for a four-bedroom). And the barely standing Graham Home for Old Ladies on Washington Avenue will soon be luxury condos.

PROGNOSIS: The area has gentrified northward, all the way to the Navy Yards and the BQE, and eastward, claiming the western edges of Bed-Stuy. "In a boom, people lose sight of the inconvenience of changing from the G to the A," says Minsky. Will they still? B.K.

Williamsburg

The primary draw of Williamsburg used to be its one-stop ride to the East Village. "They used to all go into Manhattan," says broker Bill Kirrane. "Now they've set up their own little colonies—opening bars, art galleries. It's sort of fed on itself. It's like Greenwich Village 35 years ago." But the pleasingly bleak landscape of tenements, garages, and factories is cheaper and definitely cooler than the Village. So it should be prime time to settle down, right? Not quite. Problem No. 1 is availability, as there's a limited stock of things for sale. Then there's the stock itself. "Mostly they were built for people who were not of the upper social stratosphere," says one broker.



WILLIAMSBURG RENTAL
$2,600 a month to shelter five groovy kids.

THE NUMBERS:

Purchase	1996	2001
1 BR	$90K–$120K	$125K–$175K
2 BR	$165K–200K	$220K–$225K
Row House	$125K–$225K	$325K–$425K

Rentals	1996	2001
Studio/1 BR	$700–$800	$1,000–$1,300
2 BR	$800–$900	$1,300–$2,200
3 BR	$1,000–$1,500	$2,500–$3,000

MIGRATIONS: "Williamsburg has the biggest artist community per capita in the U.S.," says broker Kenn Firpo. The area's also taken off in the past two years as a housing destination for the newly graduated (often employed by a dot-com). It's so young there's a *Logan's Run* feel to Bedford Avenue sometimes. Meanwhile, "They're spreading east and south, but you can only go so far south before you bump into the Hasidic neighborhood. We're now renting around the fourth stop on the L," Firpo says. That's Bushwick. Others are moving north to the Polish blocks of Greenpoint, even though it's on the G train and is slathered in aluminum siding.

CREATURE COMFORTS: Even if the only local ATM is in the bodega, things have sped up: Most of the restaurants, boutiques, and bars that have opened target the newcomers. It's gotten so developed that locals have even banded together to revoke the liquor license of Sin-e, a 360-capacity club near the L stop. "Over the past two years, it's definitely gone over the top," says author Phil Dray, who's lived there since the eighties. "People late at night yelling, cars honking. I don't think anybody minded the neighborhood itself perking up a bit, but we don't want it to become another Ludlow Street."

WHAT'S NEW: "People who are buying are doing gut renovations," says William B. May broker Penny Pear. And even if a number of people are still living illegally in converted lofts—a whole group was kicked out recently due to fire concerns—increasingly there are market-rate conversions of factories. There's a twenty-story building planned for the south side, near Peter Luger. The condo apartments will start at $150,000 for a one-bedroom.

PROGNOSIS: Look for things to slow down a bit. Not that the landlords are worried. "As far as landlords go," Firpo says, "if it drops 10 percent, big deal—we're so far ahead." BRIAN KENNEDY

Photographed by Noah Sheldon.

CHICAGO HOPE

The Towers, on Central Park West at 105th Street, has long been one of the city's spookiest ruins. But developer Dan McLean thinks that when his renovation is done, affluent New Yorkers will flock to it, as they once flocked to the Dakota. Is he crazy? Maybe, maybe not. But he *is* from Chicago.

BY SARAH BERNARD

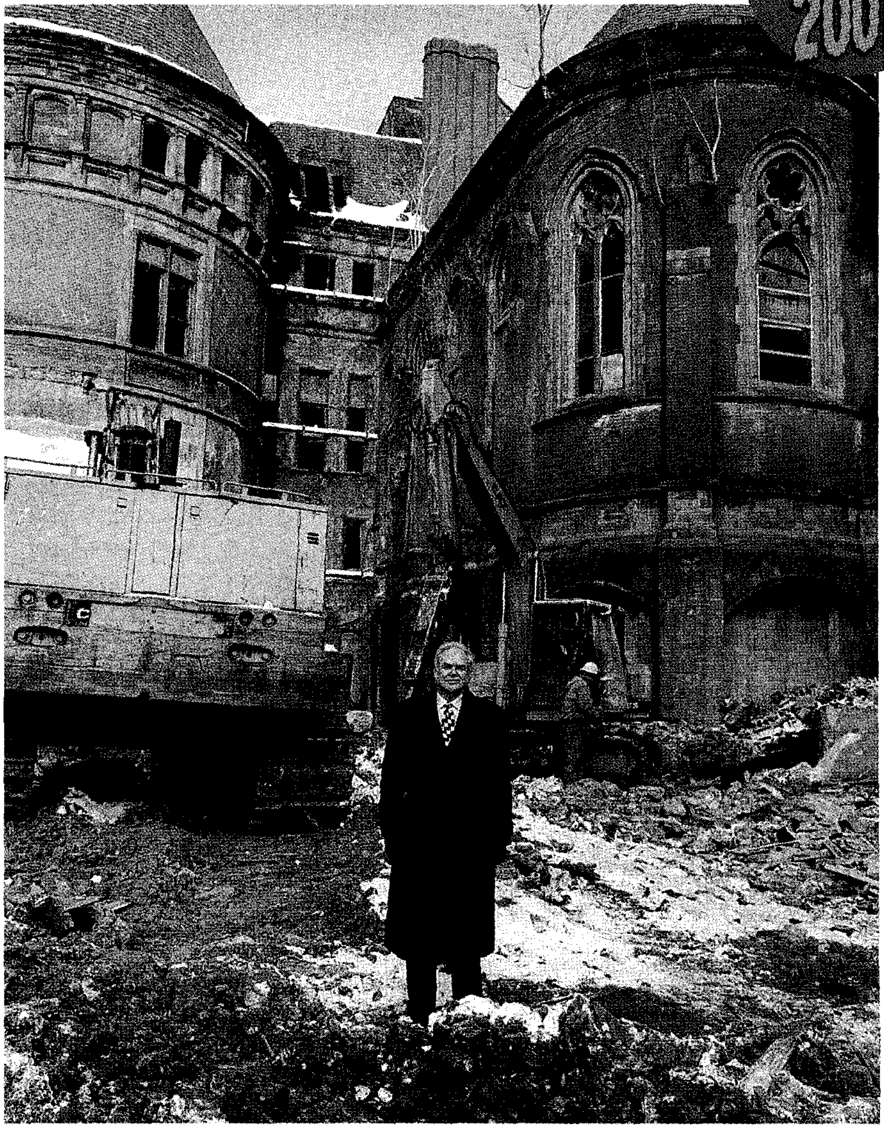
REAL ESTATE 2001

YOU MIGHT THINK THERE ISN'T MUCH OF A market for a $5 million apartment on 105th Street, but Dan McLean disagrees. The Chicago developer, who built a significant chunk of his city's South Loop and purchased most of Fisher Island off the Miami coast, is making his first foray into the New York market. He's transforming a long-derelict Victorian cancer hospital on 455 Central Park West into $800-a-square-foot condos with a 25-story tower soaring behind it.

At the moment, however, the once lordly looking brick-and-Belleville-stone château with conical towers and arched windows looks more like the urban version of *The Amityville Horror*. Worse, it's within gunshot range of the Frederick Douglass Houses, a project that not so long ago hosted a brisk crack trade.

The Towers, as it's known, seems to be a haunted site. (Perhaps literally. One of the architects looking at a historic photo of the place spotted what he joked was a ghost in one of the windows.) At least three developers have tried to realize their visions for the project in recent years, but none have even gotten a spade in the ground—until McLean.

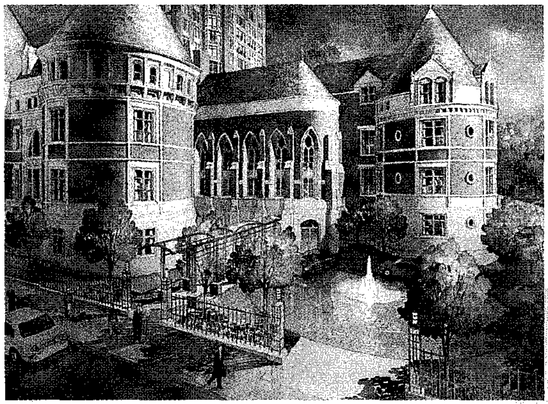
"I've been lucky enough to be able to see things other people haven't necessarily seen," says McLean, who's not referring to ghosts. "I discovered early on that if you did a big enough project you could create new neighborhoods. A die-hard New Yorker wouldn't have lived there ten years ago. But you can become jaded in your own city. I look at it and see that it's on the park, there are women jogging. It's the Dakota of the north."



PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATTHEW SALACUSE

BUILDING IT IS ONE THING. GETTING Manhattan's most affluent apartment hunters up above 96th Street is another. McLean's MCL Companies has shelled out a reported $24 million in cash for the property (development will cost him another $150 million) precisely at the moment when the demand for super-luxury apartments shows signs of slowing down. Still, the person with the wherewithal to pay for that 4,000-square-foot duplex in a former chapel with stained-glass windows has got to feel, when he steps out of his private elevator, that his or her values are reflected. A condo, these days, is a statement of self, a message. That's what McLean has been spending much of his energies working on.

At the first of many Tuesday-morning marketing meetings, this one at the offices of Douglas Elliman, the building's sales agent, a phalanx of marketing and P.R. people pick at muffins, looking eagerly at McLean, whose sunny midwestern countenance is a surprise in the hyperintense world of Manhattan development. Mock-ups of 455 CPW stationery are being passed out for his approval: green paper with a small Four Seasons–esque tree mounted against black posterboard. "It's an important signature of the property," says a marketer. "That's the conservative choice. But then again, a lot of people do ivory. I think 'moss' gives it a little more signature. And again, it's the green of the park." "I'd go with green, sure," says McLean.



Later, at the Union Square offices of Perkins Eastman, one of McLean's two architecture firms, the fixtures are the focus. Chicago vs. New York standards go head to head. "Brass?" says MCL development director Anne Miller. "Brushed stainless," everyone retorts in unison. In McLean's Chicago buildings, he has a design center that offers thousands of options, but such customization is too costly in New York, he explains, flipping through binders of kitchen samples. "Here you just pick out a nice level of standards."

The Towers was originally put up in 1884 by John Jacob Astor III as the New York Cancer Hospital (a precursor of Sloan-Kettering). Its rounded towers were designed on the theory that germs couldn't hide in the corners.

In the fifties, it became the infamous Towers Nursing Home, which was shut down after owner Bernard Bergman was convicted of Medicaid fraud. Developer Lewis Futterman bought the property from the city for back taxes in the mid-eighties, and then spent three years getting plans for renovation and a tower designed by Peter Bafitis (the other architect, now of RKT&B, who has become the project's de facto historian) approved by the Landmarks Commission. He then turned a profit selling the package to Ian Schrager in 1988. It was Schrager who shifted the entrance from 106th Street to Central Park West, supersized the units, and envisioned a kind of self-contained compound with a grocery store, a health club, and a gigantic parking garage, for which he had to apply to the zoning board.

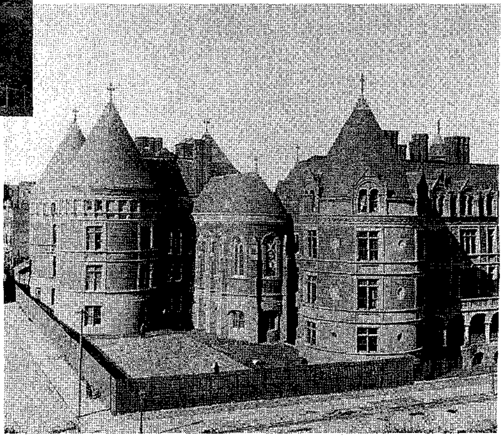
When the market turned bad, Schrager was unable to get his project off the ground. Nine years later, Savanna Partners snapped up the Towers—from the bank—to build an assisted-living facility and brought in Perkins Eastman, which specializes in such ventures, to reconfigure the plans into smaller units. The zoning was changed from "residential" to "residential hotel."

In 1999, the Towers went on the block yet again, when the company that agreed to run the home for Savanna reneged. Columbia University made a serious run at it for faculty housing. Two private schools were interested as well, until McLean came in at the eleventh hour. Last March, the day before bids were due, he was playing golf on Fisher Island. "My friend Arthur Halleran, the only other Irish guy on the island, had known about it a while but didn't get around to telling me," he laughs. (Halleran is now an investor in 455 CPW.) "So I flew in the next day, looked at the project, and made an offer."

NOW, A YEAR LATER, AS DEMOLITION OF what was the Tower's non-landmarked former X-ray building on the corner of 105th begins and the project finally feels like a reality, the industry forecast is decidedly mixed: "I have a hard time getting people to look above 90th Street," says one condo broker. "There are some issues," says Carol Mann, senior vice-president at Stribling. "On Manhattan Avenue, there are blocks and blocks of projects—that will never change. But I'd be bullish on 455, no question. Columbia has come down, the Upper West side has gone up. There's a huge resurgence in Harlem. It should work."

The winds of uptown gentrification might be in his sails, but all hasn't been smooth for McLean. For pre-development work, he hired Louise Sunshine, the brassy condo-marketing guru who helped make Trump millions and is currently overseeing high-end jobs like the AOL Time Warner tower at Columbus Circle and Richard Meier's Perry Street project. But when it came time to start selling 455, McLean's advisers wanted him to work with Elliman.

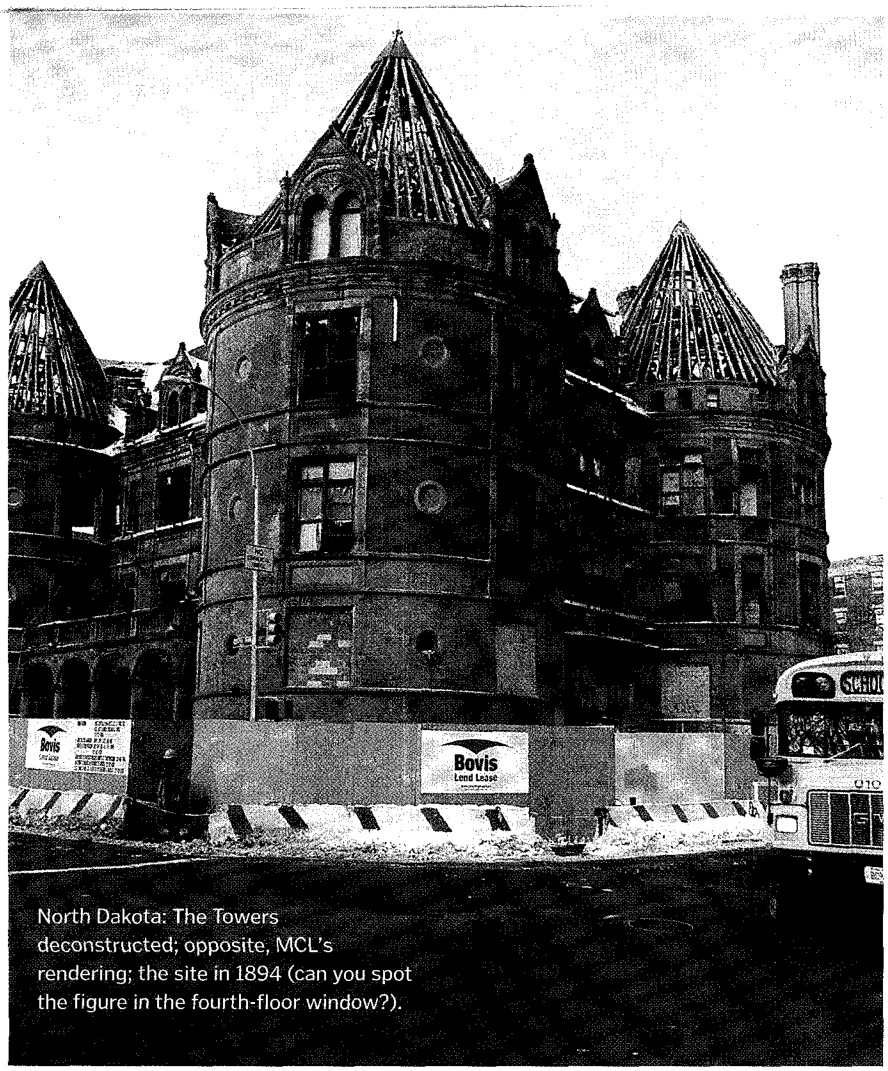
Of course, Sunshine's ready to run down the project. "If they made it $500 a square foot they'd be successful," she says. "The other issue is that the rock formations of the park are very high on 105th and 106th Street. For park visibility you'd have to get on the upper floors of the building. It's very risky."



"I think Louise did an excellent job helping us design the project," offers McLean. "I think it's unfortunate that she would say something derogatory about a project that she helped design."

BY 9 A.M. ON AN ICY JANUARY MORNING, the crew has set to work peeling slabs off the Towers' roofs and hurling them to the snow-covered ground. No small task, considering ailanthus trees are now sprouting from the turrets. The inside is filled with pigeons, squatters, and ash from a fire in the seventies. Even the electricians are getting spooked. "You walk in there, you hear things up top," whispers one. "Crazy

Rendering by Gilbert Gorski. Photograph courtesy of Peter Bafitis.



North Dakota: The Towers deconstructed; opposite, MCL's rendering; the site in 1894 (can you spot the figure in the fourth-floor window?).

stuff up there," agrees another, shaking his head.

"They'll be reused," says McLean, pointing to a growing pile of bricks in back, next to a cone-shaped smokestack that was once the hospital's crematorium. As McLean steps onto the Street, a colorfully dressed woman, who looks more like the lead singer in an East Village rock band, interrupts: "I just want you to know, I think what you're doing is terrible!" "What?" asks McLean, slightly chuckling, "Saving the building?" Then he steps over, hardhat-less, to inspect the spot where the circular driveway and fountain will someday be. "Hey!" says the foreman, known as Big Tony. "Don't die before you finish paying!"

In his limo heading downtown, McLean thinks about what the girl said. "I think she thought we were tearing it down," he concludes. "And she had purple hair and a nose ring, so I'm not too worried." She's not the only neighborhood resident who's unhappy, however. "All I'm going to get out of it is rats running around the street for the next year," says a resident of West 103rd Street. "And I hardly consider that progress." In zoning-board hearings last summer, a group called the Save the Towers Committee tried to overturn the city ruling that changed the zoning back to "residential," citing an increase in traffic and noise level. They lobbied for a university or even, as a local psychiatrist suggested, an American Museum of Medicine. Either idea would not cover the $20 million needed for the restoration. "Building a condo," says McLean, "and having the new tower is, economically, the only way."

AT THE NEXT MARKETING MEETING, there is some good news: They've signed David Rockwell to do the lobby and children's room. "It's a name!" says LD&A's Len Dugow. "Anne was beating him up on the price," laughs McLean. "And he says, "Well, you *are* going to use my name aren't you?" A final mock-up of the brochure is ready. "I didn't care for 'sleek modern architecture,' " says Miller. "I'd use 'traditional.' And where it says 'slate and marble finishes'? We don't have slate. The rest is great." Next are the photos: autumn parkscapes, jazz cafés, and one abstract shot of a gigantic black-and-white dog asleep on a red velvet couch. "I like it. It says we're tender, dog-friendly," jokes McLean, "and that the rooms are big enough to fit a dog that size," adds an Elliman broker. "How long's it going to take to print?" asks McLean. "Six weeks? Jeeze, give it to me, we'll take it to Chicago and get it done in two."

Next on the agenda are amenities. It is decided to amp up the health club and lap pool and turn it over to American Leisure and the Rockwell group to configure. "How about a storage area?" someone suggests. "Will the valet wash cars?" "We can put that in," says McLean. "Tailoring maybe?" "Sure." A debate ensues over what to call the extra-helpful concierge. "Supierege" is voted down. "That's not right," sighs Miller. "We'll work on it." "How about a temperature-controlled wine cellar?" say Dugow. "We can charge by the bottle," says McLean.

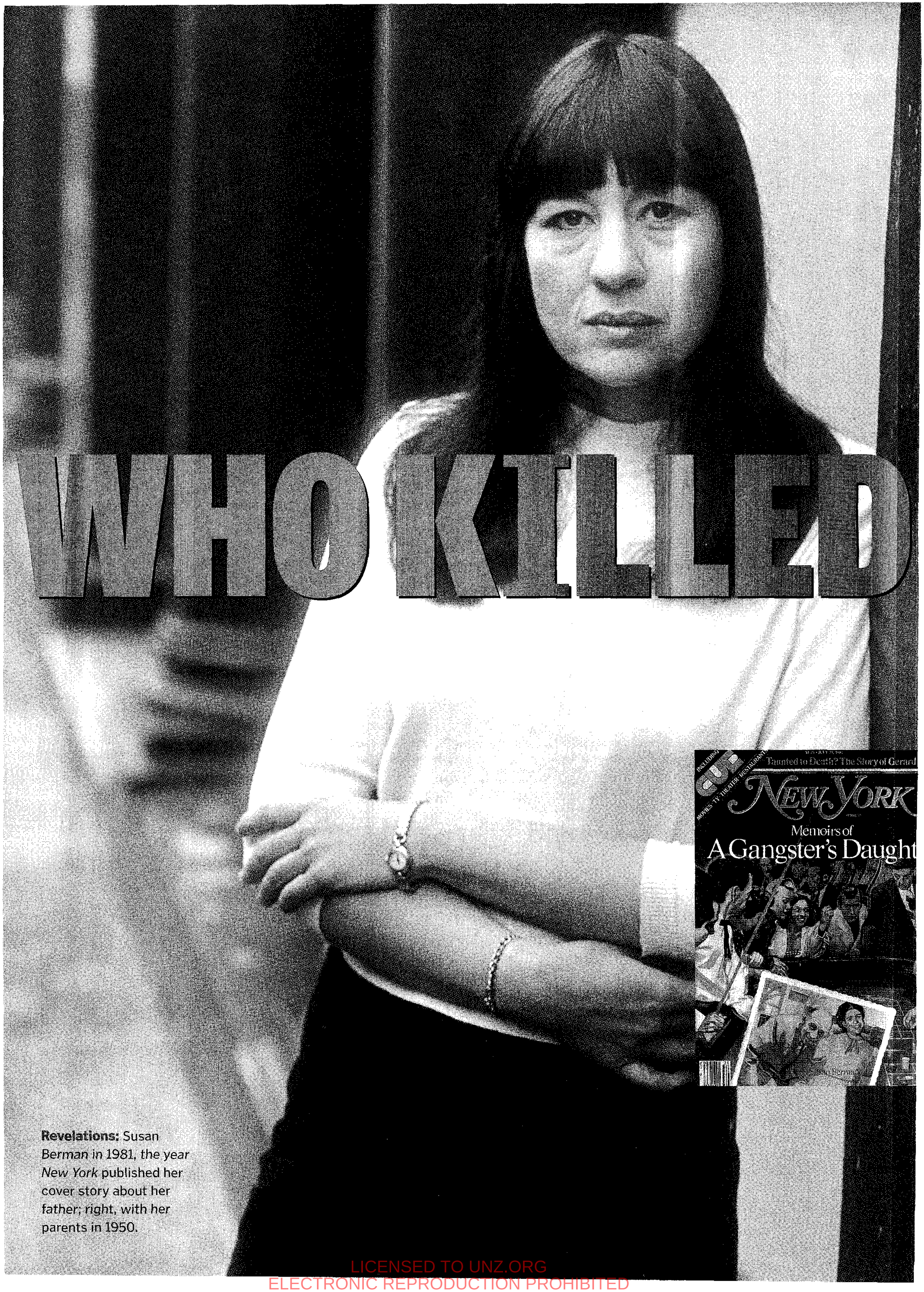
He may not be part of the New York real-estate elite, but McLean is, as they say, a big deal. His 350-acre estate in Wisconsin has an eighteen-hole golf course. The sand traps spell out his initials. "Oh, I know Christie Hefner," he says, when she comes up in conversation. "Very serious girl." Mayor Daley lives in one of his buildings. Oprah—is there a bigger Chicago name?—has a place on Fisher Island. "The other day, my sales guy was talking to these college kids," says McLean. "I said to my secretary, 'Why is he wasting his time with those kids!' And she goes, 'Dan, those are the Backstreet Boys.' "

Still, one has to wonder if he has other, perhaps greater, worries about the Manhattan market. "Things are very different than they were in the overbuilding days of the eighties," he says, shrugging off even the possibility that he's missed one of the city's greatest booms. "More people want to stay in the city. They've already branched out to Chelsea, the 59th Street Bridge . . . there are not very many opportunities elsewhere."

This week, the triple trailers that will make up the sales office have been installed where the X-ray building was. Despite a few last-minute glitches (like the fact that LD&A suddenly went out of business), the selling is set to begin the first week of April. Even now, MCL gets two or three calls a week from eagle-eyed buyers who've tracked them down from the tiny logo posted on the site. There are rumored to be sports figures who've come calling. "No one we can say," says McLean. The resident who McLean is *really* hoping for, however, is one he figures can easily commute to his new office: Bill Clinton. "It's a natural," he says, his excitement gaining speed. "We are definitely," he says, "definitely sending him a brochure." ■

Photograph by Matthew Salacuse.

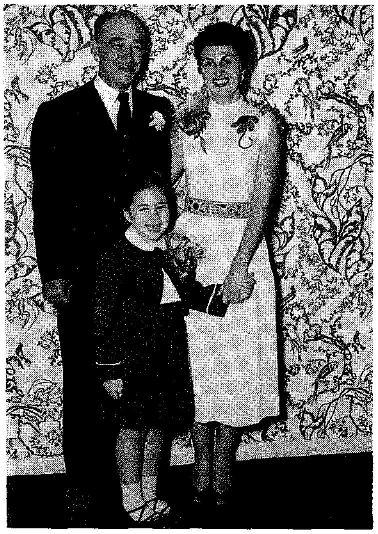
WHO KILLED


Taunted to Death? The Story of Gerard
NEW YORK
Memoirs of
A Gangster's Daught

Revelations: Susan Berman *in 1981, the year* *New York* published her cover story about her *father; right, with her* parents in 1950.

THE GANGSTER'S DAUGHTER

Writer Susan Berman, whose devoted circle of intimates included real-estate scion Bobby Durst, didn't discover her roots as a Mafia princess until a freewheeling stint at *New York* in the seventies. Her father died of natural causes, but she was murdered, gangland-style, in L.A. just before Christmas—leaving questions worthy of one of her own mysteries. **By Lisa DePaulo**



ON DECEMBER 19TH, FIVE DAYS BEFORE POLICE FOUND HER BODY, SUSAN Berman was talking on the phone with actress Kim Lankford, one of her closest friends. Some of what she said is so disturbing, in retrospect, that Lankford is tormented by the fact that she didn't ask more questions. But conversations with Susan were almost always filled with breathless drama. If she was up, you knew it. If she was down, you knew it. Either way, you knew the details. That was Susan. • That night, Lankford was packing for a cruise; for the first time in years, the two wouldn't be spending part of the holidays together. Kim felt guilty about that. But Susan assured her they'd have plenty of time to

Photographs: left to right, Mary Ellen Mark; courtesy Sareb Kaufman.

celebrate when she returned, and besides, she might have big news by then.

"I have information that's going to blow the top off things," Susan told her.

"What do you mean?" Kim asked. "What information?"

"Well, I don't have it myself," said Susan. "But I know how to get it."

"Well, be careful, for God's sake," said Kim.

Susan promised they would talk more after the holidays. It wasn't unusual for her to be "about to get information"; she was a journalist. And she was working on three big projects—two book ideas and a television pilot. Two had to do with Las Vegas, where Susan had spent her childhood as a mobster's daughter, a subject that haunted all of her work, as well as her life. So Kim assumed it was something about that. When she hung up, Kim thought to herself, *Who cares who killed Bugsy Siegel?*

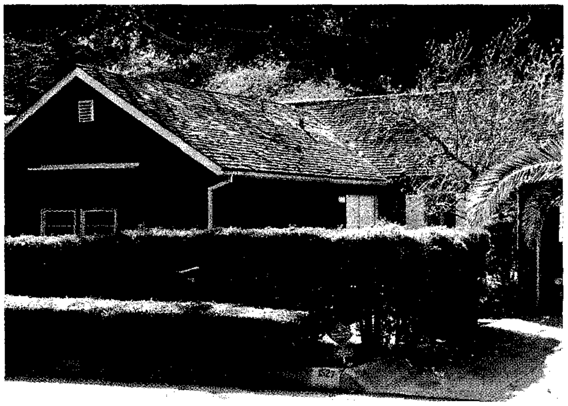
At another point in the conversation, Susan said she'd just talked to a psychic. This, too, wasn't unusual. Psychics were among the few things Susan had faith in. She had regular phone consultations for over fifteen years with her psychic in New York, but it seemed she had seen a new one recently in L.A. "She told me I was going to die a violent death and that there'd be a gun involved," Susan said.

Oh, Susan, Kim remembers thinking.

LESS THAN A WEEK LATER, AT 1 P.M. on Christmas Eve, the Los Angeles police were called to Susan's run-down home on Benedict Canyon Road by neighbors who'd grown alarmed that one of her three wire-haired fox terriers—so precious to her, such a nuisance to others—was running wild and barking hysterically. Susan would never have left Lulu unattended for so long. The cops found the front door unlocked and the back door ajar, and followed the bloody pawprints of the dogs to the back bedroom. Dressed in sweats and a T-shirt, Susan was lying on the cold, hardwood floor, with a single bullet in the back of her head. She'd been dead for at least a day.

When friends made their pilgrimage to 1527 Benedict Canyon Road, numb with the news, they'd all remember the same grisly detail: Still on the guest-room floor, framed by the pawprints, was a clump of Susan's lustrous, long black hair—her friends used to tease her that she kept the same sleek style, always with bangs—dried in a puddle of her own blood. "You couldn't help but see it, it was all that was left," says her friend Julie Smith, a successful mystery writer. "But no one talked about it, no one wanted to go near it. It was too awful to contemplate."

It's been over two months now, and the mystery of who killed Susan Berman has only gotten creepier and more complex—the kind of story Susan herself would have been obsessed with. When news of the killing hit the papers in early January, it shocked the literary communities on both coasts. From her impressive career at *New York* in the late seventies and early eighties to her subsequent years in Hollywood, Susan made a vivid impression wherever she went. Few, particularly in creative circles, could resist the mob daughter turned journalist with a repertoire of fantastic, almost unbelievable life stories. She also had a catalogue of bizarre fears and phobias, impossible for anyone close to her to ignore: She couldn't cross bridges or drive on certain streets, she couldn't eat in a restaurant without interrogating the waiters or summoning the chef (panicked that she would die from one of her countless allergies), and she couldn't go above the third floor in a building unless accompanied by "a big strong man" and assured that the windows were "hermetically sealed" (her biggest phobia was that she would hurl herself out a window).



WAS SHE KILLED because she'd been harboring some secret about Bobby? Was he sending her cash out of kindness—or to buy her silence?

"She had her flaws," deadpans Rich Markey, a comedy producer in L.A. who was the last friend to see her alive. "But her friends adored her. Everyone adored her—in spite of them, not because of them."

And given what she'd been through in her 55 years, they also understood them. Susan had survived the Las Vegas mob of the fifties, and one unbearable loss after another. She had almost come through the brutal downward spiral that led her from a life of enormous (mob) wealth and success as a writer to such financial and emotional despair that she resorted to selling her mother's treasured jewelry. Through it all, she was always Susan—complicated, tormented, irresistibly entertaining.

"The way she dealt with her past was to make it theater," says New York *Times* reporter Dinitia Smith, a colleague from her *New York* days. As the years went by, that got harder and harder. "How can I go on?" she would ask her friends. Or, her best-known half-threat: "I'm going to get into the bathtub with my hair dryer now." Those who really knew her well didn't worry (too much) that she'd ever take her own life. "Oh, no," says Kim Lankford. "That was not an option. She would never want to miss how it would all play out."

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Courtesy of Sareb Kaufman (2); Gerardo Somoza; Jonathan Alcorn/Zuma Press.

WHEN THE NEWS HIT, HER HISTORY AS A gangster's daughter dominated the headlines. Could she have been killed for some mob secret she was about to reveal? A dubious theory, since most of the characters from Susan's father's Las Vegas days were long dead, and when she *had* written about them, it was with a mix of love and fascinated adoration. "If *I* were a gangster," says Markey, "I'd have encouraged her to write *more*."

Domesticity: Berman, clockwise from top right, as a bridesmaid; at home in L.A. with Lulu and Romeo; at the Flamingo for *Lady Las Vegas*; the Benedict Canyon house.

The case took a more macabre twist when Westchester County District Attorney Jeanine Pirro announced that Berman had been on her shortlist of witnesses to interview in yet another eerie case, a coast away from Susan's struggles. Nineteen years ago, Kathie Durst, the estranged wife of real-estate heir Bobby Durst—whose family's Durst Organization owns more than $650 million worth of Manhattan real estate—had vanished in New York without a trace. For nearly two decades—as the pretty medical student's friends spoke out about an abusive marriage and battles over money—investigators had their sights on the now-reclusive Bobby, who happened to have been extremely close to Susan Berman, going back to their days at UCLA in the late sixties. Susan referred to Durst, who declined *New York*'s request for an interview, as her brother; the dedications in her books invariably began with his name. "It was always 'Bobby this, Bobby that, *wonderful* Bobby'," a friend recalls. Yet when Susan tried to reach him last summer to borrow money, she was irked to find he'd changed his phone number. So she wrote to him in care of the Durst Organization. The letter reached its target: In the months before her death, she had cashed two $25,000 checks from Bobby. In fact, Susan borrowed a lot of money from a lot of people over the years and always tried to pay it back. In this case, however, she was touched, one friend says, that Bobby had told her the $50,000 was a gift.

This past November, as a result of a lead in a separate case, the long-dormant Durst case was reopened by Pirro's office—to a flurry of national headlines. Meanwhile, New York investigators, acting on several tips that Berman might have some critical information, sought to find her. They got there too late.

Suddenly, the "Durst connection"—*Was she killed because she'd been harboring some secret about Bobby? Was he sending her cash out of kindness, or to buy her silence?*—piqued the interest of the national media. By early February in Los Angeles, you couldn't visit Susan's Benedict Canyon home without encountering a photographer in the bushes.

SUSAN'S DAILY ROUTINE included marathon phone conversations with people she was close to—and that was a fairly large group. "If you were a friend, you were a close friend," as one put it. She insisted you be well-versed in the characters and plots of her colorful and troubled journey, especially that of her beloved father, Davie Berman, the Las Vegas mobster who was Bugsy Siegel's partner and who died at 53 of a heart attack when she was 12. She would write that she never appreciated the irony that he was maybe the only gangster of that era to die a natural death. More ironic was that she would be the one to die, 43 years later, with a bullet in her head: If it wasn't a mob hit, it sure looked like one.

Her father was the "love of her life." His FBI WANTED poster was hung prominently in her living room (the phrase on it, ALIAS: DAVE THE JEW, amused her to no end), and most of her friends knew the story of his funeral, when little Susie tried to throw herself into the casket. Then came Uncle Chickie, the debonair gambler who raised her after her father's death and who, like Susan, died broke. And of course, there was Mister Margulies—that was his real name—her only husband, who died of a heroin overdose.

And they knew all about her glamorous mother, Gladys, the onetime tap-dancer who lived in perpetual fear that her family would be killed and who had been institutionalized for depression much of her short life. When she died, at age 39—Susan was 13—the death certificate said "suicide by overdose." But Susan, an only child, always believed her mother was killed by the mob for the sizable fortune Davie Berman left her. Nearly twenty years ago, when she wrote her acclaimed memoir, *Easy Street*, for which she diligently researched her father's past, she'd also tried to solve the mystery of her mother's death. Now she'd been talking about investigating that mystery again. Could *that* have been the big news she was about to get her hands on?

In Susan's last days, there'd be a great many other phone conversations with the friends who'd become her family. Some troubling, some hilarious, all intriguing. Though Susan seemed to share everything, "she also kept a lot to herself," says record mogul Danny Goldberg, a close friend who'd known her since the seventies. "Susan was somewhat mysterious to some of her closest friends. And she had compartmentalized lots of relationships."

Different people got different pieces of Susan's ongoing puzzle. To some she seemed more upbeat than she'd been in years. Yes, she'd been reduced to recycling chapters from *Easy Street* in *Las Vegas Life* magazine. Still, she was convinced that, any day now, one of her book proposals or screenplays would be bought—and was relieved that she'd just gotten that chunk of money from her friend Bobby Durst to pay off her crippling debts. "Susan always was optimistic," says another old friend, Stephen M. Silverman. "There was *always* a Major Project around the corner."

Berman also seemed to be finally resolving a war with her elderly landlady, Delia "Dee" Baskin Schiffer. She complained that Baskin Schiffer would show up at the house unannounced to argue about overdue rent, the dogs, repairs; the standoff had escalated to a three-year eviction battle. Susan repeatedly told friends she was afraid of Dee and feared she would harm her dogs, Lulu, Romeo, and Golda. She said she knew Dee owned a gun. In the days before she died, however, Susan used her Bobby Durst money to settle up with Dee, even paying her rent through March, and a lawyer had worked out an agreement for Susan to leave the property by June. She told several friends she was relieved it was all finally over.

But there were also indications that, below the surface, all was not well. “She called me in October and left this long message on my voice mail,” says Silverman, an editor at People.com, “and it was so disturbing—‘I'm on Prozac but it's not working’—and she desperately needed me to find her an agent. Oh, it was dramatic. I thought, this is a person in trouble. And Susan really was going through terrible times. Of course, by the time she called me back, everything was fine in the world.”

She had fretted endlessly about various ongoing dramas, from her health to her dogs to her obsession with her longtime manager, Nyle Brenner, with whom she had a fraught relationship. “We would analyze Nyle for hours and hours,” says one friend, who had her last “Nyle session” with Susan on December 21. Brenner, who friends say is the person who spoke to Susan most frequently and spent the most time with her, declined to be interviewed—except to say, “Yes, yes, I know, everyone adored her, she was remarkable and incredibly talented. But she was not an easy person to get along with, okay?” Reached a second time, Brenner hissed, “I've got other clients to take care of, I don't have time for this . . . I was tapped out by Susan every day while she was alive, and it's the same thing in her death. I just can't take it anymore.”

HER FATHER'S FBI WANTED poster was hung prominently in her living room (the phrase on it, *Alias: Dave the Jew,* amused her no end).

> *There are scars within me that will probably never heal; I have uncontrollable anxiety attacks that occur without warning, I am never secure and live with a dread that apocalyptic events could happen at any moment. . . . Death and love seem linked forever in my fantasies, and the Kaddish will ring always in my ears.*
>
> —From *Easy Street*

SUSAN WAS 32—AND ALREADY A successful journalist—before she began to believe her father really was a gangster. She'd begun her career in the seventies at the San Francisco *Examiner,* creating quite a splash with a magazine cover story headlined, “Why I Can't Get Laid in San Francisco”. Despite her obvious intelligence (not to mention her career as a reporter), she'd managed to hold onto her innocent memories of Davie Berman—the man who took over Bugsy Siegel's “operations” at the Vegas casinos in 1947 when Siegel was gunned down gangland-style (and Susan was 2).

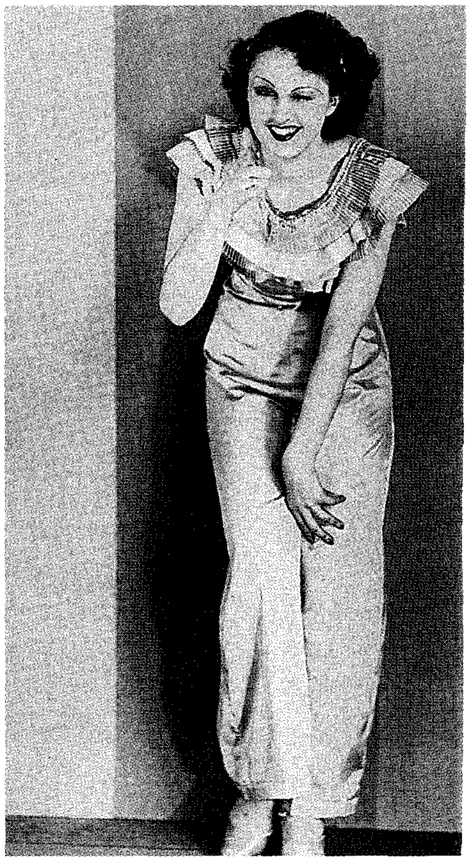
That changed after one too many *New York* colleagues asked if she was related to the notorious gangster. In 1977, she became obsessed with finding out everything—traveling back to Vegas and her father's hometown of Ashley, North Dakota, using the Freedom of Information Act to get crateloads of FBI files about her daddy. It was all there: the bank robberies, the kidnappings, the killings, and those unknown years before she was born, when he'd spent seven years at Sing Sing.

Easy Street was published to raves in 1981 and bought by Universal Studios for $350,000 (the movie was never made, a long-standing source of disappointment to Susan). During that time, she wrote for *New York*—though never in the office, of course; it was too high up—penning clever and sassy articles on everyone from Bess Myerson to herself (she wrote at length about her phobias, which didn't kick in until she was 27 but flourished in Manhattan).

“She was certainly the most brilliant person I ever knew,” says a friend from that time, *Über*-publicist Liz Rosenberg, part of Susan's posse. The group included *Saturday Night Live* star Laraine Newman, Danny Goldberg, *New York* writer Julie Baumgold, and, to be sure, Bobby Durst, who was working for the family business and enjoying the life of a real-estate scion at the time.

Spellbindingly funny and capable of dishing with the pros, Susan became a darling of the New York literati, hosting dinner parties at her Beekman Place apartment and entertaining friends at Elaine's, where she usually picked up the tab. Her first apartment, a tiny studio, had only a shower, recalls Stephen Silverman, who lived next door. “So Susan would put on this *Madam Butterfly* Cio-Cio-San bathrobe and walk out on the sidewalk, come into my building, and go right into my bathtub. Whenever she wanted! I could be screwing my brains out, Susan would just barge in.”

Susan had inherited some of Davie's fortune, in the form of a trust fund, and friends say she spent it like it would never end, dressing in $400 St. Laurent blouses bought three at a clip from Saks and boots that she liked to buy in sets of two.



The only snag was the *Easy Street* book tour. “An absolute nightmare that required all this elaborate planning,” remembers one colleague from that time. Her publisher had to jump through hoops to find hotel rooms below the third floor and circuitous routes to avoid tunnels and bridges. Once, she wrote in *New York*, she was mugged at knifepoint by a gang that tried to force her into a car heading for Brooklyn, where she was certain she would be raped. She managed to escape: *No fucking way* was she driving over the Brooklyn Bridge.

Susan was, as Silverman puts it, “a *lot* of work.” She was famous for fallings-out with people that could last for years. “If

Photographs courtesy of Sareb Kaufman.

you pissed her off," says her adopted son, Sareb Kaufman, "she was like, 'Fine, you're out of the Rolodex. *You* obviously have an issue.' " But she also took no small pleasure in directing the lives of everyone in her circle. Bede Roberts, who'd known her since her Berkeley days, remembers telling Susan she fancied a man on campus who'd jilted her. " 'You really want this guy, you're sure?' Susan asked. 'OK, I'll get him for you. But you've got to do *everything* I say, nothing more, nothing less.' Susan plotted the course of his breakdown with exquisite precision." And he married her.

DESPITE ALL SHE LEARNED ABOUT HER FAther, Susan continued to worship the memory of Davie Berman. In New York, she carried his mug shot in her wallet and would "whip it out, the way the rest of us showed baby pictures," Dinitia Smith remembers. To Susan, her father would always remain the doting, charismatic figure who rushed home from the casino every night to read her a bedtime story (and then returned to count the house take), who filled an entire room with toys and gave her a house account at age 7 so she could order shrimp cocktails from room service, who commissioned an oil painting of her in pigtails to hang in the lobby of the Flamingo, who taught her to play his favorite song, "The Sunny Side of the Street," on the piano, and who held Passover seders in the casino showroom. Through the years of her childhood, Davie Berman, not Elvis (though she *did* know Elvis), was the King of Vegas, and Susie was his princess.

Keys to the future: Berman, age 5, at the Flamingo; mother Gladys, opposite, in 1939.

With his wife in the mental hospital, he'd pick Susan up from school and help with her math homework in the counting room, using casino chips. He taught her how to play gin at age 4, so she'd have something to do with the bodyguards who lived in their house (she grew up thinking they were friends and uncles, and took great pride in beating them). It wasn't until she researched *Easy Street* that she realized who those gin buddies were. Or why the windows in their custom-built house were so high off the ground (to keep from being shot at from the street). And why they never had house keys (mobsters didn't keep them, to protect their families in case they were killed; the bodyguards took care of the door). And why she would be whisked away in the middle of the night to the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Los Angeles. She thought these trips were family vacations and loved the ice-cream sundaes from room service, when in truth it was to protect her when there was mob unrest.

A month before her father died, he threw her a lavish 12th-birthday party at the Riviera. Liberace sang "Happy Birthday" to her. In order to produce friends for the party, Davie invited the daughters of other Las Vegas hotel owners, few of whom Susan knew.

Within hours of Davie Berman's funeral in 1957, the mob had cleaned out her house and given away all her toys. She was shipped off to Idaho, with a single trunkload of clothes and mementos, to live with Uncle Chickie. Later, she was sent away to various boarding schools, her education broken up by regular visits with Chickie in jail. He would ask her to wear Chanel No. 5, she wrote, so he could "smell the real world."

IN 1981, A LONG EXCERPT FROM *EASY Street* appeared as a cover story in *New York*. Within two years, Susan left New York City; high on the film sale and flush with cash, she had decided to move to Los Angeles and become a screenwriter. She bought a black convertible and headed off to the city that had been a refuge when she was growing up. Two months later, while standing in the Writers Guild script-registration line, she met Mister Margulies. He was 25 and broke. She was 38 and Susan Berman. "I know you," he said. As she later wrote, he recognized her from the pictures on the back of her books. Mister's father had them all because he worked for Davie Berman in Vegas. "He loved your dad," Mister told her.

In no time, he'd moved into her Benedict Canyon home—the same one she would return to years later and die in. In those days, it was a lovely, cheerful place; Dee Baskin Schiffer kept it up then, according to Susan's friends. "And there was love in the house," says Kim. "They were crazy about each other." In June 1984, in a lavish wedding at the Hotel Bel-Air complete with ice swans (like the ones Davie the Jew insisted on having at the Flamingo), she married her Mister. Bobby Durst gave her away. Film producer Robert Evans toasted the couple. Susan footed the bill.

Soon after, she bought a beautiful home in Brentwood. The marriage lasted little more than six or seven months. "She called me crying and said, 'It's over,' " says Julie Smith. "I said, 'What, Susan?' She said, 'He's been doing drugs again and he's been abusing me.' " Susan knew when she married him that Mister had done heroin in the past, but she believed it was over. Susan was naïve to the point of being puritanical about drugs, say her friends. Despite the pain in her life, she never self-medicated. "I don't think she ever smoked a joint in her life," says Lankford. "The only alcohol she ever drank was a glass of wine at Passover." This too came from her father, who told her that drugs and alcohol "were for suckers" and not something Jews did.

They had already divorced when Mister overdosed, at age 27. At the time, she believed they were reconciling, and his death led her to a nervous breakdown. "Did he meet the doom meant for me?" she later wrote. Her psychic, Barbara Stabiner, met her shortly after, when a mutual friend called her in New York because Susan was on an L.A. rooftop, threatening to jump. Stabiner talked her off the roof by reading her tarot cards and seeing great things in store.

In 1987, she met the man who friends say was the last real boyfriend in her life. Paul Kaufman was a financial adviser with Hollywood aspirations and two young children. They all moved into Susan's Brentwood home (up the street from Nicole Brown Simpson's townhouse). And for a while, he made her happy. What made her happier were his children. Mella and Sareb, now 24 and 26, consider Susan Berman their mother. "She held my hand through everything difficult in life," says Sareb, who works in the recording business. "She was the only person who was always on my side and never judged me."

Her relationship with Paul ended in 1992—around the time Susan went broke. The bank *(continued on page 107)*

Best Bets

RIMA SUQI

Glass Menagerie Karim Rashid calls his New Move collection of glass objects "very me." And indeed, the shapes are classic Rashid—organic and colorful—but with a twist. Right-side up, they're decanters or vases; turn them over and they become footed bowls or simply objets d'art. The items in the collection range from $98 to $285 and come in both clear and colored glass.

► **TOTEM GALLERY**
83 Grand Street/212-219-2446

DEWALT
DEWALT

Buzz Thrill Using power tools and listening to loud music go hand in hand. DeWalt's new combination radio–battery charger, built specially for use on work sites, bows to this ignoble tradition. Simply place the DeWalt battery pack in the back of the radio, and it will charge in about an hour. Buy it for your contractor. After he finishes the job ($199).

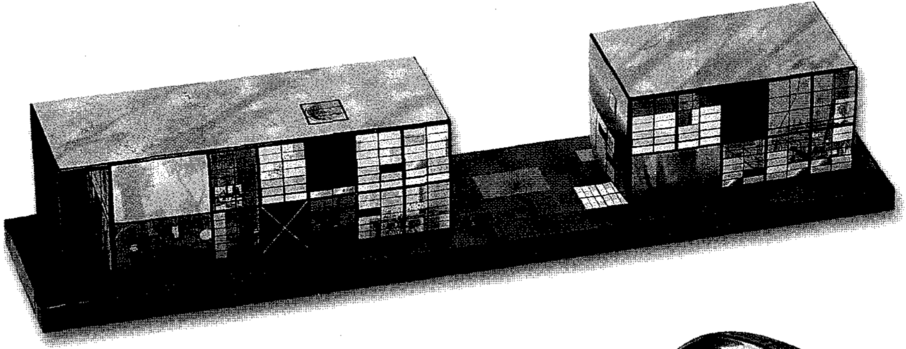
► **LONDON TRUE VALUE HARDWARE**
191 Ninth Avenue, near 21st Street/212-243-5266

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NEDJELJKO MATURA

Modern Love

For those still pining over the Kaleidoscope, last year's incredibly popular modernist dollhouse, here's your chance to play house without making such a great financial or space commitment. A new book, *Eames House*, by James Barkley, includes previously unpublished pictures of the modernist masters' Los Angeles home plus three perforated sheets that can be assembled into three-dimensional replicas of the house (American Vessel, $45).

▶ **MXYPLYZYK**
125 Greenwich Avenue/212-989-4300



Faking It

This fun new toy, called the Voice Changer, lets you change your voice to sound like a robot—à la R2-D2—or a slightly possessed child. Made by Boxer, it comes in three colors: green, red, and navy ($20).

▶ **E.A.T. GIFTS**
1062 Madison Avenue, near 80th Street/212-861-2544

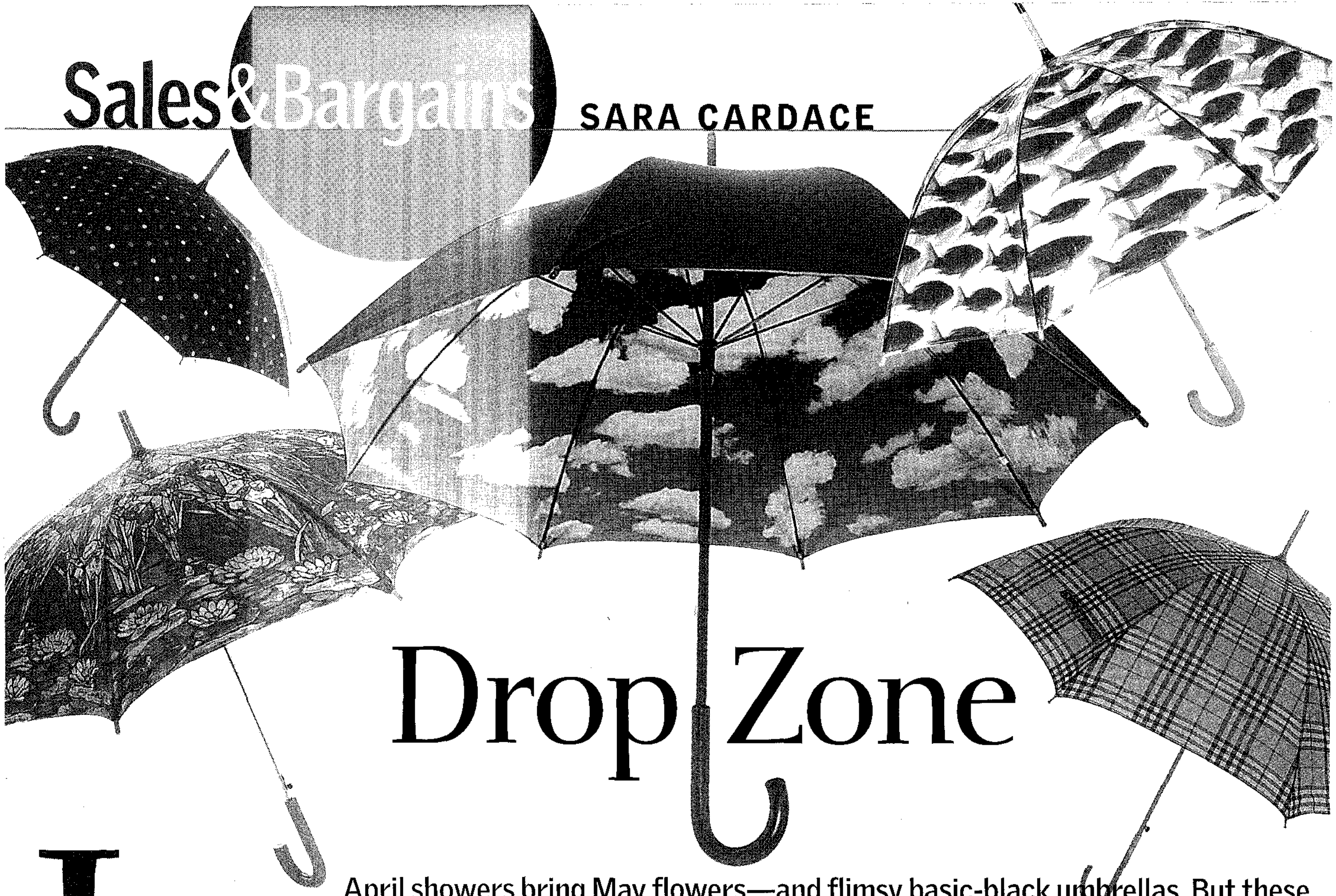
City Slicker

Packing a suitcase may be an art, but it isn't brain surgery. You just need to pick the right items. Like this raincoat from Longchamp's Pliages collection. Folded, it fits into a five-by-six-inch case with a chic leather handle. Unfolded, it's a full-length nylon slicker. Available in nine colors ($175).

▶ **LONGCHAMP**
713 Madison Avenue, at 63rd Street/212-223-1500

Sales&Bargains

SARA CARDACE



Drop Zone

April showers bring May flowers—and flimsy basic-black umbrellas. But these antic, stylish prints will have you singing in the rain.

IF YOUR UMBRELLA COLLECTION consists of a bunch of those buy-and-toss numbers you get from a street peddler whenever you happen to be caught in a downpour—the kind of umbrellas you don't miss when they're forgotten on the subway—why not invest a little thought into picking one that goes beyond basic New York black and won't collapse like a cheap lawn chair at the first gust of wind? You may not want to pony up $295 for the much-coveted Burberry plaid, but for a fraction of that price you can find an umbrella that keeps you dry while making a splash.

Liberty's khaki-black-and-red-plaid model (pictured, $40 at Venture) is a classy, functional umbrella in the perfect print that will stay chic for seasons to come. Other fun bumbershoots from the same line come with goldfish prints on vinyl (pictured) and in *faux* python ($36.95 each at Laytner's Linens & Home).

For more takes on the classic-with-a-twist, check out **Echo**'s black model with tiny, festive polka dots (pictured, $48 at Tribeca Luggage & Leather) and the line's other subtle, clean designs, which often feature understated florals and dark iridescent solids.

We also love the **Museum of Modern Art Design Store**'s Clouds umbrella (pictured, $45), with its simple black exterior and a turquoise interior covered with white, fluffy clouds—so the weather will be perfect wherever you walk. Very Magritte. And if it's kitsch you're after, **Bed Bath & Beyond**'s Inspirations line should do the trick, with prints derived from famous works of art, like a pink-and-blue print of Warhol's *Marilyn* and Monet's *Waterlilies* (pictured) done in muted tones ($20 each).

Venture, 1156 Madison Ave., near 85th St. (212-288-7235); Laytner's Linens & Home, 2270 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-724-0180); Tribeca Luggage & Leather, 295 Greenwich St. (212-732-6444); MOMA Design Store, 44 W. 53rd St. (212-767-1050); Bed Bath & Beyond, 620 Sixth Ave., at 18th St. (212-255-3550).

Picks of the Week

Bob Mackie is having a sample sale this week with offerings from his Mackie line, a lower-priced collection of swank cocktail suits, all available at wholesale prices or below. *498 Seventh Ave., near 36th St. (212-736-0305); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 10-5; 3/5-3/9.*

Eileen Fisher's semi-annual consolidation sale offers reduced prices on women's separates from her fall collection, with all items under $70. *395 W. Broadway (212-431-4567); A.E., M.C., V.; Thurs. 11-7, Fri.-Sat. 11-8, Sun. noon-6; 3/8-3/11.*

Tourneau's liquidation sale means 20 to 70 percent off original prices for its famous watches and jewelry from brand names like Raymond Weil and Movado. *635 Madison Ave., at 59th St. (212-758-6688); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon. and Thurs. 10-6:30, Tues., Wed., Fri., and Sat. 10-6.*

The Quilted Corner is marking down its large selection of country-style quilts for its winter clearance sale, with all quilts reduced by up to 60 percent. *120 Fourth Ave. (212-505-6568); Mon.-Fri. 11-7, Sat. 10-6; through 3/31.* ■

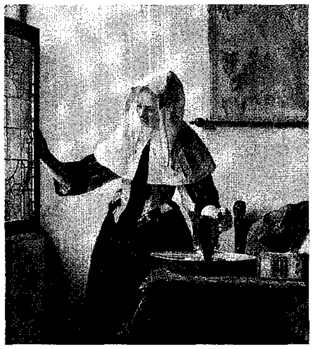
DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, New York Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusiveto "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Photographed by Shin Ohira.

CUE

A Weekly Guide to Culture and Upcoming Events

Edited by Christopher Bonanos



Art

Vermeer & the Delft School

At the Metropolitan Museum

The National Gallery's once-in-a-lifetime Vermeer show was derailed by weather and the 1995 budget shutdown. So here's your chance to catch up locally: Fifteen of the world's 35 Vermeers will attend, along with dozens of works that evoke the artist's world and the light he rendered so memorably. (Pictured, *Woman With a Water Jug,* 1665.) Opens March 8.

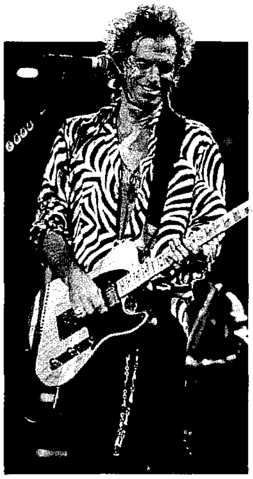
Best of the Week

Theater

The Invention of Love

At the Lyceum Theatre

From Waugh to Orwell, English writers seem to find school memories—good or bad—all but irresistible. In Tom Stoppard's complex, difficult drama, about A.E. Housman's life and loves at Oxford, Richard Easton plays Housman in his old-poet years; Robert Sean Leonard, in his Shropshire-lad days. (See page 91.)



Nightlife

Smart Sounds: Music for the Planet IV

At the Beacon Theatre

This rain-forest benefit avoids the usual lefty suspects (what, no Indigo Girls?). Acts include Keith Richards, Dr. John, and—make that *most* of the usual suspects—Jackson Browne. Many will play instruments made from tropical woods harvested in an environmentally sound manner. *Dude.*

Dance

Whirling Dervishes of Damascus

At Cooper Union

"They look like they're about to rise off the ground!" an incredulous friend said upon seeing these sacred Muslim dances. The Syrian troupe's first New York show features Sheikh Hamza Shakkur, a master singer from the Great Mosque of Damascus. (See listing, page 111.)

Restaurants

Craft

43 East 19th Street

As *New York* went to press, Tom Colicchio's new venture was still without those final details that make a top restaurant. (Con Ed service, for instance.) But it's slated to open by the weekend, and Colicchio's a proven entity—Gramercy Tavern!—so grab a table now. (Call 212-780-0880 to reserve.)

Movies

New York Underground Film Festival

Starts March 7

Starry-eyed NYU film students join L.A.-loathing iconoclasts for more than 100 shorts and features about everything from junkies to backyard wrestlers. Some good, some bad, some ugly, but we'll take it over a Keanu Reeves product any day. (See page 85.)

Books

Dreamcatcher

By Stephen King; Scribner; $28

Clearly Stephen King's brain was working overtime after that road accident. *Dreamcatcher* is huge (620 pages, said to have been written in longhand, since he was too badly hurt to sit at a keyboard), classic King in tale and tone. And it's full of horrible, crunching collisions.

STEPHEN
KING
DREAMCATCHER

Photographs: clockwise from top left, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Kevin Mazur; courtesy of the World Music Institute.

Pistol Whipped

Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts may be the firepower forcing audiences to *The Mexican*, but James Gandolfini's lovelorn gay goombah steals the show.

THE STAR-POWER COMBO OF Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts is the big selling point of **The Mexican**, and yet they share few scenes together. They barely have time for chemistry, let alone biology. The film is structured as a series of crosscutting dual story lines, and almost all the good material is on the Julia Roberts side. I'm not sure the film would have been any better if the stars continually occupied the same airspace, but at least then fans expecting a romantic twosome would not have felt cheated. Left to his own devices, without the constant companionship of a love interest, Pitt indulges his worst acting habits—the glam poses and forced bonhomie. Roberts does a bit better because she has a major actor to play opposite: James Gandolfini, who is finally given an opportunity to bring to the movies some of the power and stamina he brings to *The Sopranos*, in a very different role as a gay hit man who holds Roberts hostage. He's the true star of the film, and his stardom is achieved in the most honest of ways, through the sheer brute force of his talent.

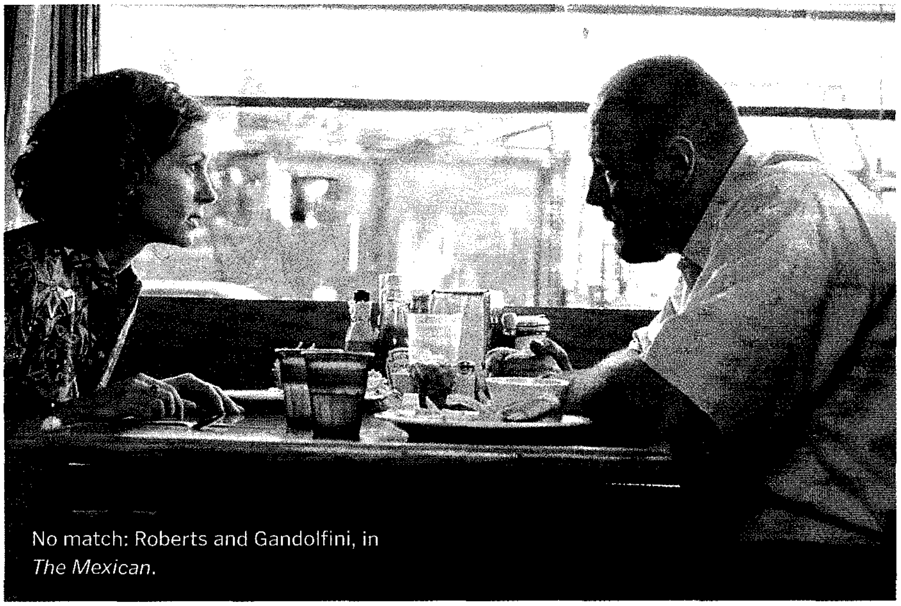
The Mexican
Starring Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts.

Series 7
Starring Brooke Smith.

Brad Pitt's Jerry is an amiable, feckless bag man for an L.A. mobster (Bob Balaban), and Julia Roberts's Samantha is his long-suffering, still-enamored girlfriend. Jerry is sent to Mexico for what he says will be his last job before going straight, but Samantha, fed up with his false promises, goes off on her own to Vegas, where she intends to begin life anew as a croupier. Samantha is clogged with psychobabble, and we're supposed to find it cute that she reads a book called *Men Who Can't Love* with highlighter in hand. "I need sunshine to grow," she declares, and unfortunately the moviemakers seem to be on her wavelength. That is, when they're not putting her down for her babbling. Director Gore Verbinski and screenwriter J. H. Wyman are specialists in playing both sides of the street. Samantha's gooey romanticism is frequently made to seem like true love; there is never any doubt that she will stand by her man, even if he doesn't stand by her. And yet, ultimately, her quest for self-help comes across as foolery—a dingbat exercise for unliberated ladies. The condescension built into this approach is perplexing, since Samantha is so much more ardent than Jerry and, more to the point, Julia Roberts is so much more ardent than Brad Pitt. Coming after *Erin Brockovich*, her flouncy bubble-headed appearance here seems more of a punishment for her than a reward.

The filmmakers also play it both ways in portraying Mexico. Jerry goes down there to retrieve a priceless antique pistol known as "The Mexican," and keeps running into locals who make fun of his gringo ways. But these same Mexicans are often characterized as Frito Banditos. The film racks up p.c. points while indulging in the crassest stereotyping. And then there's the brownish haze that hangs over most of the Mexican scenes (the Vegas scenes are a lot brighter). What is this recent fascination with browning up Mexico in the movies? When Steven Soderbergh did it in *Traffic*, he at least was creating an overall color scheme, although I wasn't crazy about the technique there, either: It encouraged us to think of Mexico as a brackish netherworld, a gringo conception if ever there was one. In *The Mexican*, the tobacco-stained look of Jerry's scenes are a dumb-dumb's shorthand, a way of letting the slow learners in the audience know we're not in Nevada.

Only in the James Gandolfini sequences does the film confound cliché, and then probably only because of the actor's overriding intensity. Playing a character who calls himself Leroy, Gandolfini in his scenes with Roberts is required to be in touch with his "sensitive" side; Leroy understands Samantha's love blues because he's got his own. The implication is that heterosexual hit men are unencumbered by similar feelings of love and loss. All this might seem rather dopey and offensive except that Gandolfini makes you forget the sex-typed


No match: Roberts and Gandolfini, in *The Mexican*.

Photograph by Merrick Morton/DreamWorks.

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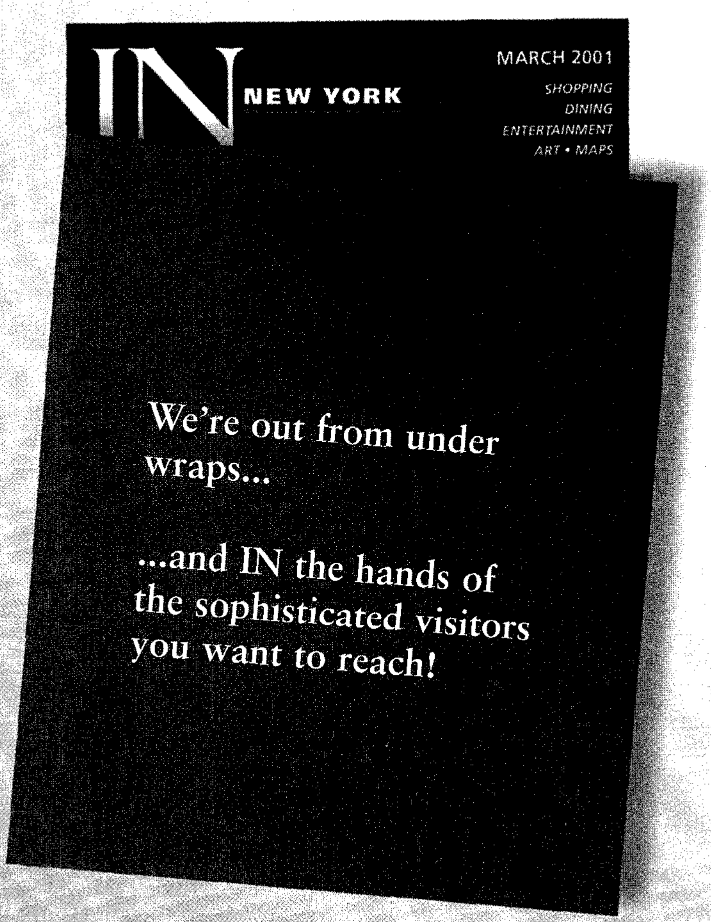

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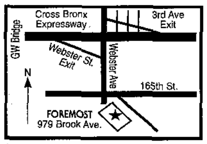

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special pleading and allows you to see just a man in pain. The babble he is called upon to spout issues from a hurt core, and so it doesn't seem so much like babble after a while.

That's quite an achievement, since the main line of repartee between Leroy and Samantha makes a sob session on *Oprah* seem positively rigorous by comparison. "If you love somebody, when do you give up?" is the constant refrain. The right answer is: "Never." Is this what is being taught in couples therapy these days? The swoony high-mindedness of this sentiment is undercut by another, more curious motif. I don't think I've ever seen a mainstream movie in which people are shown going to the bathroom in one another's presence quite as often as in this one. The implication is clear: Love means never having to close the door.

THE SLEW OF REALITY-BASED TV SHOWS IS beginning to spawn movies about those same kinds of shows. Often billed as satires, they frequently seem indistinguishable from their targets. *The Truman Show* and *EDtv* were pioneers in this field, but they didn't score big, perhaps because people like their "reality" with a bit more reality. Daniel Minahan's **Series 7**, which was shot on digital video, is closer in look and episodic format to an actual TV series, but in its own small-scale way it promotes itself as a searing indictment of the *Real World* culture. Mostly, though, it resembles a digitized revamp of the sci-fi classic *The Tenth Victim*, remembered chiefly for Ursula Andress's bullet-firing brassiere. Nothing as royal as that takes place in *Series 7*, which stars Brooke Smith as the eight-months-pregnant reigning champion of a hit TV series called *The Contenders*, where randomly selected people kill off one another until one is left standing. A stentorian, Mr. Moviephone–ish voice narrates the action, and the cast of contenders, including an emergency-room nurse, a high-school brat, a conspiracy theorist, and a dying pacifist, are intended to represent the gamut of all-American ordinariness. There's less here than meets the eye or ear: We're a long way from Jonathan Swift, and any old episode of *Cops* is bound to be more engrossing, not to mention "real." But, after being floored by her in *Vanya on 42nd Street*, I was glad to see Brooke Smith in a leading role, where she belongs. She holds a gun so convincingly that she could, God help us, become an action-movie queen. ■

BOOKS DANIEL MENDELSOHN

Emerald Bile

Having exploded the sentimentalism about Ireland in her last book, Nuala O'Faolain writes a novel that's both gripping mystery and soapbox diatribe.

'TRY TO PACK EVERYthing in," the heroine of Nuala O'Faolain's mammoth first novel tells herself, paraphrasing Keats's famous advice to Shelley to "load every rift with ore."

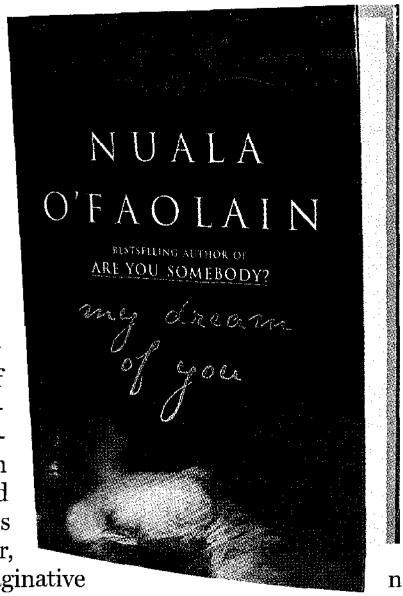
It's clearly a recommendation that the author herself takes to heart. O'Faolain, a popular columnist for the Irish *Times*, created a sensation with her best-selling memoir *Are You Somebody?*, which managed to pack in very many things indeed: a wounded personal history about a tragically dysfunctional family; a bleak condemnation of Ireland itself, where, she suggests, entrenched patriarchy and powerful Roman Catholicism continue to make life a medieval hell for women ("I think unconsciousness was the condition that allowed the society I grew up in to exist"); and a hard-eyed and unembarrassed account of one independent woman's struggles with sex and love and, eventually, childlessness.

The hard-knocks Irish narrative, with its familiar cast of characters—the long-suffering mother, the hard-drinking, good-for-nothing father with the redemptive charm, the fiercely observant child who grows up to be the writer—has, of course, been committed to countless memoirs and novels that unabashedly target the heart. Those of us who sniffled through *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* back in sixth grade are the same people who have made the McCourt brothers very rich men. What made O'Faolain's memoir so remarkable was its utter unsentimentality—the way it aimed so resolutely at the head. Or, I can't help thinking, at women's heads: "Most memoirists in Ireland write about their fathers in a sweetly one-dimensional way, as if there were no unconscious" is not a sentence likely to occur to a male writer.

My Dream of You
By Nuala O'Faolain.
Riverhead Books;
500 pages; $25.95.

Aiding and Abetting
By Muriel Spark.
Doubleday;
176 pages; $21.00.

Not surprisingly, tragically dysfunctional families, sharp-eyed feminist critiques of contemporary Irish society, and coolly unsentimental descriptions of middle-aged women having (and thinking about) sex are the principal elements you find in O'Faolain's novel, **My Dream of You**. But if this story of a middle-aged Irishwoman journalist's confrontation with both personal and national demons sounds suspiciously familiar, there's enough real, imaginative fiction here to keep you glued to the book.



What keeps you engrossed is the fact that the novel interweaves the contemporary bits—the bits that sound awfully like what you already know about O'Faolain and her opinions—with an irresistible mystery. Kathleen, who fled her impoverished Irish home for London in her early twenties, is a successful 49-year-old travel writer whose life of "perfect nothingness," spent alternating between the exotic destinations she writes vacuously about ("Sri Lanka: Isle of Spices") and a grubby basement apartment, clearly reflects a desire to obliterate a painful past. As, indeed, does her penchant for meaningless and often degrading quickies. It's partly because she realizes that her whole life has been marked by a "misunderstanding of passion" that Kathleen decides, after her gay American best friend, Jimmy, suddenly dies, to quit her job, return to Ireland, and devote herself to a new and more substantial kind of writing project: a book about a notorious nineteenth-century scandal involving an affair between the wife of an English landlord and her Irish servant. (The scandal really took place: O'Faolain quotes all of the original source material in italics, to distinguish her imaginative reconstructions from the official record.)

A persistent preoccupation for O'Faolain and so many other Irish writers is the inescapability of the past—the way the past continues to write the present, politically, socially, economically, emotionally. (Alcoholism is both a real and a symbolic expression of this in a good deal of Irish writing.) In this book, O'Faolain's intertwining of present and past allows her to confront this issue in an interesting and genuinely novelistic way. Whatever Kathleen's hopes that the divorce case will provide distraction from her grief and the emptiness of her life, the struggle to get to the bottom of those long-dead, rather gothic passions—did Marianne Talbot really commit adultery with William Mullan? Or was she framed by her cruel, inheritance-hungry husband?—forces her to come to terms with her own long-buried family traumas, not least of which is the horrific death of her mother, whose own fantasies of "passion" weakened and then destroyed her. Most strikingly, because the scandal occurred at the height of the potato famine, the dire specter of Anglo-Irish politics hovers over the narrative even when it's at its most seemingly "romantic." (Some of the novel's most memorable passages come not only in the grim descriptions of the famine and of England's criminal indifference to it but in subtler though no less vivid reminders of humiliations that

Photograph by Liz Steger.

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Kathleen is forced, as an Irishwoman living in England, to submit to. Soon after reaching London, she realizes she has to hide her accent in order to get served in a pub, or to get a decent apartment.)

Kathleen may misunderstand passion, but O'Faolain certainly doesn't. I can't remember the last time I read a novel that so eloquently describes the erotic dilemma of middle age—the way that hunger for sexual and emotional satisfaction, unabated by time, intersects with a shocked recognition that the body itself changes, or even fails. "When I was young," Kathleen wryly muses at one point, "I took the fabric of myself for granted." This, of course, is a subject that's been dealt with in many novels; what makes O'Faolain's stand out is the journalistic eye for detail that etches Kathleen's dilemma into your memory. The narrative foil to the story of Marianne and Mullan's affair is an ongoing affair between Kathleen herself and a genial, somewhat older married man called Shay, whom she meets on a ferry. In one amazing passage, Kathleen realizes that Shay has taken out his dentures in order to give her greater satisfaction during oral sex. As Kathleen gets closer to the complicated truth of what actually went on between the nineteenth-century lovers, she also gets closer to having to decide whether to become, in essence, Shay's official mistress, putting herself at his disposal, or to remain independent—and, most likely, loveless and celibate as time continues to pass her by and her body continues to disappoint her.

As gripping as the erotic-mystery plot is, and as nuanced as Kathleen's story is, there are a good many awkwardnesses here; they often make you wish the book were about 150 pages slimmer. O'Faolain the columnist can't resist a soapbox, and you wish an editor had cut some of the angry mini-lectures about politics or abortion; she makes her points about these subjects better when she sticks to writerly means (for instance, a brief aside about "the terrified women at the check-ins in Dublin Airport on their way to England for secret abortions"). Flashbacks are very awkwardly introduced—things like "Spot reminded me of the day we heard that Jimmy was dead" make you wince—and certain characters, not least poor dead Jimmy himself, are flat and all too obviously foils of one sort or another. And the triumphant emotional summing-up at the end is way too aromatherapeutic for serious fiction ("And the way to do that is to see the parents—and to see ourselves—as *precious*. Just for having existed!"). But overall, *My Dream of You* is a strong and absorbing work in which past and present are beautifully tied up in the moment when Kathleen reaches her utterly right decision—and, even more, by the time you reach the book's surprising final lines, in a subtle but striking narrative sleight-of-hand that may be the most genuinely feminist thing I've seen in a novel in years. O'Faolain may pack too much into this book, but there's a lot more gold here than ore.

My Dream of You is a strong and absorbing work in which past and present are beautifully tied up in the book's surprising final lines.

WHILE COMPLAINING ABOUT CRUEL ABSENTEE English landlords, one of the characters in O'Faolain's book caustically refers to the infamous Lord Lucan, an aristocrat who disappeared from London in 1974 after allegedly beating his children's nanny to death. (He apparently thought she was their mother.) Lucan's crime, and its vividly imagined aftermath, is the Maguffin for the latest of Muriel Spark's minimalist and rather caustic studies of English mores. (The 82-year-old veteran's others include *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, A Far Cry From Kensington,* and the terrifying, traplike *Symposium.*) If *My Dream of You* is overstuffed, **Aiding and Abetting** is probably a bit underfed, a high-concept piece about a favorite Sparkian theme—the moral implications of falsehood—that's more sketched-in than fleshed-out. (This book, like O'Faolain's, depends on meaningful parallelism: The Paris shrink whom Lucan approaches to assuage his guilt is herself a fugitive from justice living under a false identity.) But if the new book lacks the rigor of some of Spark's earlier work, there's so much devilish humor here that you don't really care. "And how did you become a priest?" one typically shifty Spark character asks another here. "Well, I hid in a monastery for a time," the other blandly replies. However deliciously inauthentic Spark's cast of characters is, she herself, after four decades, remains the real thing. ■

cue

THEATER JOHN SIMON

Graveyard Humor

Martin McDonagh's *A Skull in Connemara* is a deadening mixture of absurdity and cruelty that revolves in and around a rural Irish cemetery.

IN **A Skull in Connemara**, THE young Irish playwright Martin McDonagh mashes together bits of absurdism and Artaudian theater of cruelty, then sprinkles them with some powdered Synge. This need not necessarily spell fiasco, but the jokes turn sour, the plot and dialogue are studiedly outrageous, and you don't give a farthing for any of the characters, and so the work, whatever its commercial value, is artistically nil.

Mick Dowd, in his fifties, has for a profession digging up Leenane's dead after a number of years and dumping them in a nearby lake to make room for newer arrivals. This work is done discreetly by night, with the full approval of Father Welsh or Walsh, as none of his parishioners knows his name for sure. The play opens in Mick's humble cottage, where seventyish Maryjohnny Rafferty drops in regularly for some poteen. Talk is about nothing much—e.g., whether it is still August or already September. We gather that seven years ago Mick did jail time after his drunken driving killed his wife, Oona.

The villagers suspect Mick of cracking Oona's skull with a hammer, then making it look like a car accident. This suspicion is revived in conversation with Mairtin Hanlon, Maryjohnny's twentyish and loutish grandson, arriving with the news that Father Welsh, or Walsh, has appointed him assistant gravediggerupper. The next scene is in the graveyard, where Mick and Mairtin are exhuming skulls and bones and collecting them in a sack. They are mostly taunting each other until Thomas, Mairtin's elder brother and Leenane's grandiose but inept policeman, shows up for some three-way taunting.

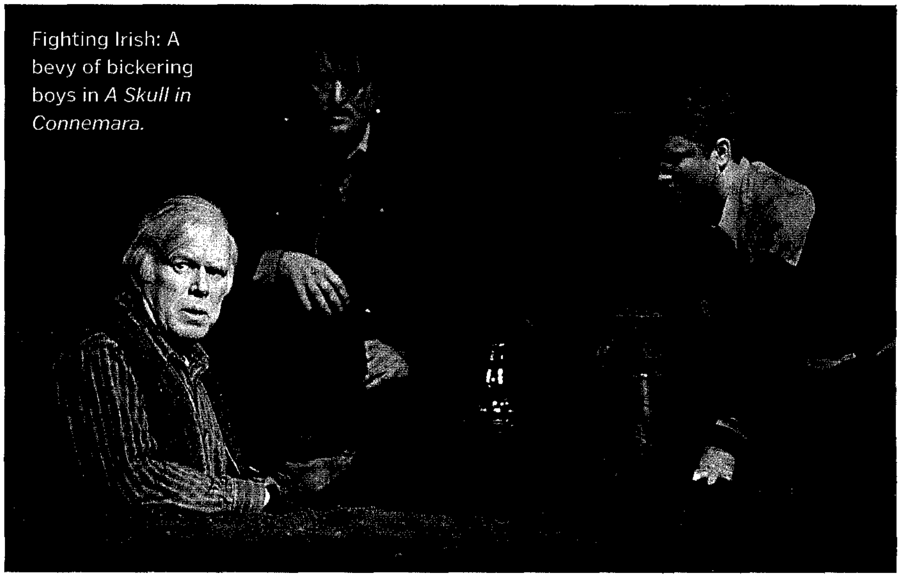
An asthmatic, Thomas alternatingly smokes and sucks on an inhaler. Mairtin is twice pushed into an open grave and pelted with loose earth; Thomas narrates the unsolved case of an enormously fat villager found nude and dead before his TV, with only a jar of jam and a lettuce in his huge fridge. Mick allows how, "If it was the height of summer, and he wasn't expecting any visitors, it might well explain the stark naked." After a meditative pause, Thomas opines, "It might explain the stark naked, ay. It might not explain the complete absence of food in his six-foot fridge! Eh?"

A Skull in Connemara
By Martin McDonagh.
Directed by Gordon Edelstein
at the Roundabout Theatre.

Spirited discussions develop about whether more people drown in septic tanks or are run over by combine harvesters, and whether drowning in one's wee is worse than choking on sick. Another debate develops about whether young Mairtin got into trouble by cooking alive a cat or a hamster. Thomas, who cannot tell the difference between circumstantial and hearsay evidence, is nevertheless a stickler for facts: "Cooking cats, ay. No. A hamster it was. *Mick*: It's the same difference, sure. *Thomas*: Pardon me? *Mick*: It's the same difference, I said. *Thomas*: It's not the same difference at all, sure. A cat is one thing. A hamster is another." When Mick wonders whether this is "worth the argue," Thomas launches on a speech climaxing with, "Things like that are the difference between solving or not solving an entire case, sure." Meanwhile, Mairtin has gone off to see Father Welsh, or Walsh, to verify whether what Mick told him is true: that people are buried with their willies snipped off lest they offend the Lord. Then Mick discovers, horrified, that Oona is missing from her grave.

The entire next scene, in Mick's cottage, is punctuated by Mick and Mairtin, armed with wooden mallets, drunkenly smashing the disinterred skulls and bones on the parlor table, so as to facilitate their disposal. One of the mallets eventually gets used on a living head.

The actors—Kevin Tighe, Zoaunne LeRoy, Christopher Carley, and Christopher Evan Welch (not Walch)—perform this stuff as if they believed it. David Gallo's set features headstones hanging from the ceiling, and Gordon Edelstein's direction is no less topsy-turvy. As I was leaving, a stranger remarked that he did not envy me my job. By the way, don't sit in the front rows, to avoid flying bone fragments. The play, unfortunately, cannot be avoided from any row. ■



Fighting Irish: A bevy of bickering boys in *A Skull in Connemara.*

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

ART MARK STEVENS

Glop Art

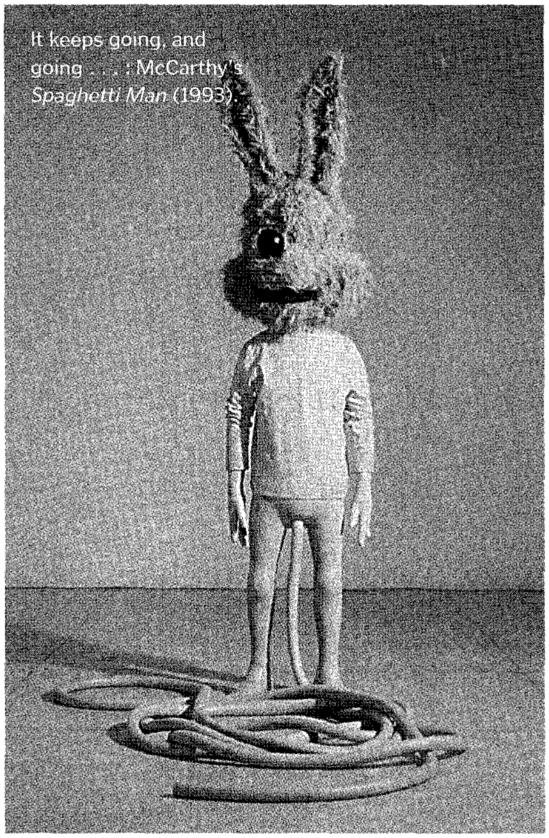
Note to the mayor: You might want to take a close look at the Paul McCarthy show at the New Museum of Contemporary Art. But not *too* close.

CONSIDER, FOR A MOMENT, the current state of sex and violence in the American imagination. In sports, there's a whopping success called the World Wrestling Federation in which human beings try to act like gorillas—which is an insult to gorillas—and stomp opponents into roach oblivion. Other sports depend upon actual injury and death; stock-car racing amounts to little without the possibility of a hero slamming into a concrete wall at 170 mph. On television, the hot new show, *Temptation Island,* invites human beings onto an island in the hope that they will sexually trash one another. In politics, the former president has oral sex in the Oval Office with the pizza girl. In the military, soldiers learn to kill their enemies by using weapons that work like playful video games. In the movies, Hannibal sups upon the brains of his victims. Eminem is dominating pop music by writing lyrics like "Bitch, I'm a kill you . . . I got the machete from O.J."

And the mayor of New York expects a contemporary artist to be what, exactly? An altar boy? There continue to be high-minded artists who ignore the hurly-burly, but it's naïve to expect that many others won't respond to the powerful, often bizarre pop currents that continually shoot across the imaginative landscape of America. If Mayor Giuliani really wanted to throw a decency fit, he should have ignored the Brooklyn Museum of Art and visited the New Museum of Contemporary Art, which is now presenting the retrospective of a man who violates every possible convention of taste and behavior with delirious abandon. **Paul McCarthy** is the ideal bogeyman for William Bennett and George Will. Perhaps he works as their double agent, for no artist is better suited to symbolize in the minds of conservative moralists the collapse of art into terminal decadence—a mess of ketchup blood, blabbering profanity, and sexual vulgarity. The most prominently placed work at the museum, *Cultural Gothic,* is a "moving" sculpture that depicts a life-size dad gazing into the future as he rests his hands lovingly upon his young son's shoulders—while the son, hips grinding, has sex with a goat.

Appalling? Radical? Outrageous? To some people, of course, but not unexpected to those who follow contemporary art and fiction or who know a little history. In certain ways, McCarthy is actually a rather traditional artist—another in a long line of shockmeisters who specialize in life's underbelly. If you take a distant view, for example, you could connect him to artists who once reveled in squalid and fantastical depictions of hell, such as Hieronymus Bosch. In the shorter term, his work echoes the melodramatic Grand Guignol, the Parisian theater that began in the late nineteenth century and specialized in blood, guts, murder, and rape. (At the Grand Guignol, a cherished special effect was to pop out a virgin's eyeballs, which often provoked fainting and vomiting in the audience.) McCarthy's work is also part of the longstanding tradition of Dada-like social and political criticism in art, which depends upon arousing people like Mayor Giuliani into the customary rage.

Paul McCarthy
At the New Museum of Contemporary Art;
through 5/13.


It keeps going, and going . . . : McCarthy's *Spaghetti Man* (1993).

The tradition is so well known in art, in fact, that only the most extreme effects can now make a ripple. In this retrospective, which was organized by Lisa Phillips and Dan Cameron and includes a large piece at Deitch Projects on Wooster Street, McCarthy breaks free of every last repression and inhibition. He releases the idiot within. He is the master of *merde.* He is the id triumphant. He will do anything to defile, no matter how gross or embarrassing. In one filmed performance, called *Bossy Burger,* a chef working on what was once the set for a family sitcom turns into a blabbering schmuck who becomes crazier and crazier, chopping and carving and smearing ketchup and mayonnaise around until the place looks like the residue of a Texas chain-saw massacre. Everywhere, McCarthy emphasizes eruptive tantrums and regressive, childish behavior. He attacks the pop icons of "normal" childhood

Collection Frac, Montpellier, courtesy of New Museum of Contemporary Art.

as if he were an insane clown pulling down the pants of a Boy Scout. In one of his largest works, he upends that little Swiss maid Heidi in every way you can imagine, and his *Cultural Gothic* not only recalls Robert Rauschenberg's legendary goat but also besmirches the cheery platitudes of *Leave It to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best.* On the cover of the catalogue, there is a picture of a "tree hugger" who has dropped trou and is humping a tree.

The aura of a mad childhood is created mainly by McCarthy's constant use of cartoon figures and grotesque rubbery masks, often with protuberant noses. In one piece of video, piggish art collectors with obscene noses opine about art; a grunting painter drags around a giant tube of color called "Shit," into which he often plunges an arm in order to smear his mark upon the canvas. Standing in the middle of this show is sort of like living inside a baby's diaper. You are surrounded by messes, smears, genitals, bottoms, and incoherent babbling sounds. When you try to lift up your eyes, you see enlarged toys in nasty poses. (I would like to let McCarthy loose in Disneyworld one night and see what the place looked like in the morning.) *Spaghetti Man,* a large bunny with a long noodle-doodle of a penis, is one of the mildest pieces in the show.

The argument made for McCarthy is that he reveals to us, with ferocious anger and Rabelaisian humor, the dirty secrets that lie beneath the sentimental posturing of official American society. He theatrically exaggerates the sort of insane behavior—such as eating human brains—people routinely buy tickets to see. He thinks the unthinkable and reveals, with cathartic urgency, the cartoonish power of the idiot id. And so on and so forth. This sort of art-argument is old. Most people know it by heart. The trouble is that McCarthy has only one note, one speed. His art is a kind of endlessly repeated punch line, always telling the dirty secret, but the secrets revealed so melodramatically are actually unsurprising. Is there an aspect of *merde* in paint? Sure, and we've heard that before. Do fathers screw up sons? Sure, and we've heard that one, too. To headline the usual secrets, McCarthy must leave out so much else, making a burlesque of art. Perhaps he is what he satirizes. ■

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CLASSICAL MUSIC PETER G. DAVIS

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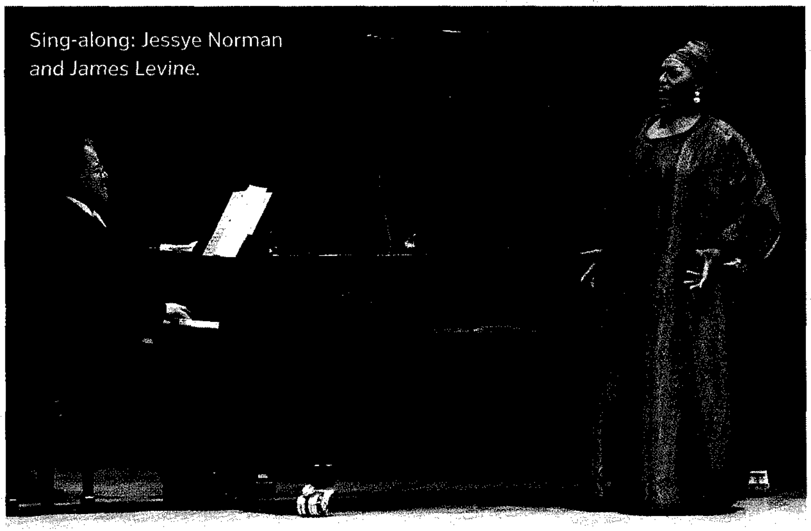
For Jessye Norman's latest recitals, people were invited to vote for her encores at Carnegie Hall's Website—a calculated ruse.

AN IMPOSING PRESENCE and dramatic event all by herself, **Jessye Norman** is at it again in Carnegie Hall, doing things her way. This time, with James Levine at the piano, Norman is presenting what she calls her intimate "Songbook Series," three recitals with a twist that might seem to tempt fate. Instead of putting the programs together in advance, these longtime collaborators plan to wait for inspiration to strike at the last moment and then decide what to perform. The idea, apparently, is to emulate the jazz singer, whose spontaneity and vocal creative freedom are qualities that Norman says she has always admired and envied. Her fans have also been invited to join in the impromptu spirit of the occasion by perusing, in advance on Carnegie Hall's Website, a selection of songs from Norman's repertory and voting for the ones they would like to hear as encores.


Sing-along: Jessye Norman and James Levine.

For anyone who has followed this career over the past 30 years, the idea of such an improvised recital format must seem rather paradoxical. After all, few singers have planned their entire artistic progress as deliberately or self-consciously as Jessye Norman, choosing operatic roles, concert appearances, and special projects carefully tailored to showcase a larger-than-life voice and musical persona that calculates every effect down to the last vocal gesture and facial expression. What Norman's attitudinizing has mainly communicated over the years is the hauteur and stately grandeur of a diva who would never dream of risking anything for the sake of "the moment."

Take the trajectory of Norman's Metropolitan Opera career, lovingly supervised by Levine himself, from her 1983 debut as Berlioz's monumental Cassandra and later as Dido, through Strauss's Ariadne and three Wagner heroines (Elisabeth, Sieglinde, and Kundry), to her most recent and possibly last Met role, Janacek's Emilia Marty a few seasons ago. For some of us who applauded it at the start, this journey so promisingly launched soon began to turn sour as Norman's opulent voice aged and lost much of its security and, what seemed even worse, her once generous manner became increasingly studied and artificial. These liabilities were even more apparent when Norman appeared on the concert stage, giving recitals that over the years have atrophied into grandiose rituals that push music far into the background.

I had hoped these three off-the-cuff recitals might help reverse all that, or at the very least provide a memento of the fresh young singer who disarmed those who encountered her back in the seventies. But no, the first recital was pretty much business as usual. The program, decided upon early enough to be printed on a program insert, contained no surprises. Nor did Norman's singing indicate any rejuvenation. Beethoven's six *Gellert* lieder were hobbled by bad intonation, while the cautious note-to-note rendition of Wagner's *Wesendonk* songs lacked any sense of their sensuous wonder. The voice sounded more warmed-up in Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and Schoenberg's cabaret songs, even though the interpretations were strictly from the hothouse, while the three encores displayed a singer who, if nothing else, knows how to work an audience.

A lavish souvenir booklet distributed free of charge contains the Songbook texts, gushing articles about the two artists, and many press photos of Norman and Levine as they looked twenty years ago. That only added to the synthetic and—dare it be said?—phony atmosphere of an occasion that had much more to do with posing and ego gratification than with music.

AT THE AGE OF 75, **Hans Werner Henze** has already broken the Ninth Symphony jinx, one that must haunt any composer who still chooses to cultivate the form in quantity. After all, Beethoven's Ninth, the most famous of them all, was the composer's last, while Bruckner never managed to finish his No. 9 and Mahler was still at work on his Tenth when he died. Henze, however, has now safely complet-

Jessye Norman
Recitals at Carnegie Hall, accompanied by James Levine at the piano.

Hans Werner Henze
Symphony No. 9, with the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Kurt Masur.

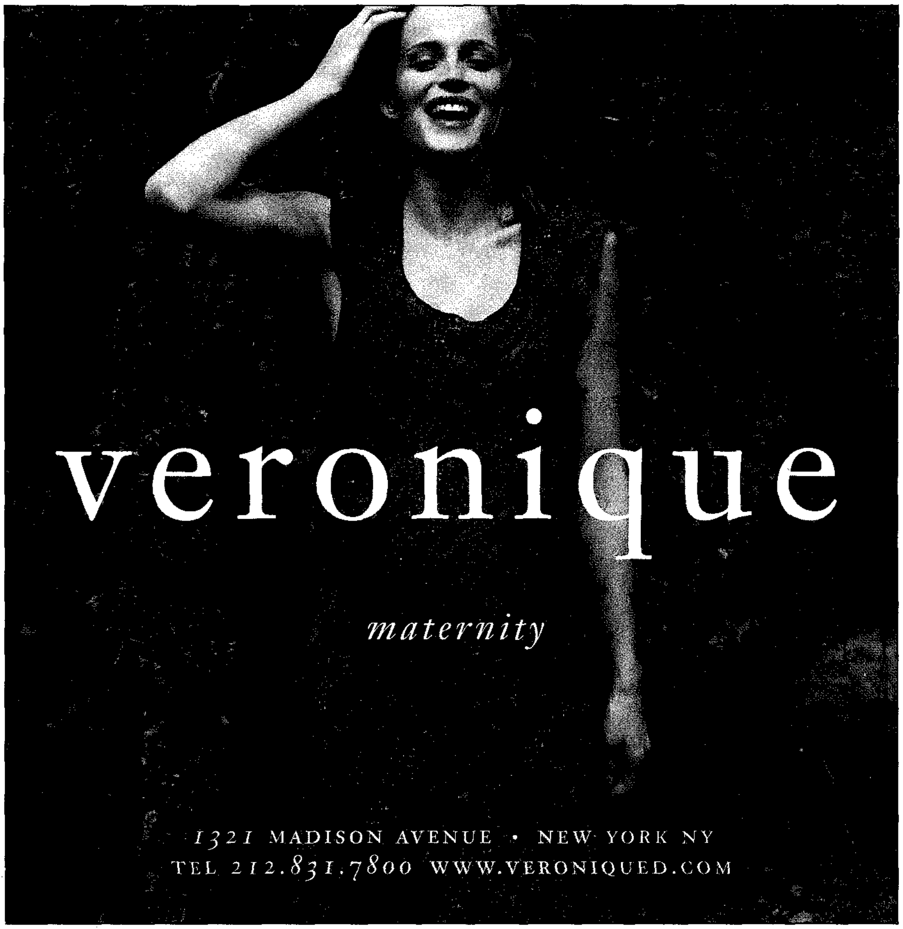
Photograph by Steve J. Sherman.

ed ten symphonies and no doubt a No. 11 is in the works. Meanwhile, his Ninth is making the rounds. First heard in Berlin in 1997, the work recently received its U.S. premiere in Avery Fisher Hall, brilliantly performed by the New York Philharmonic under Kurt Masur and with the composer in attendance.

Like the Beethoven Ninth, Henze's is a choral symphony and a major statement, although hardly an ode to joy. This score, which the composer calls "the most extreme experience I have ever had . . . the summa summarum of my musical oeuvre," was born from his memories of Nazi Germany and conscription into the army as a teenager near the end of the war. The text uses poems by Hans-Ulrich Treichel based on incidents in Anna Seghers's novel *The Seventh Cross* (made into a memorable 1944 film with Spencer Tracy), which relate the fates of seven condemned prisoners who escape from a concentration camp. Six either die or are recaptured, but the seventh, after a series of ghastly adventures, boards a Dutch ship on the Rhine and reaches freedom—a deceptively upbeat finale, since the music clearly tells us that the horror of it all could easily come again.

Each of the seven sections depicts a vividly dramatic scene or incident: the terrorized prisoner in flight, his savage persecutors, the poetic dialogue of the plane trees before they are ruthlessly hacked down and fashioned into crosses, the poignant death of a comrade who falls from a roof like a wounded eagle, the black cathedral vision where voices of the dead voluptuously praise torture and martyrdom while a crucified Christ remains silent.

Henze is correct—this uncompromising piece is the imposing sum of his compositional voice, integrating the "wild, free beauty" of his youthful style with the unforgiving, hard-edged precision of the music he wrote during his social-activist middle years. The eloquent choral gestures and dazzling instrumental colors fearlessly explore every extreme emotion bared by the text, and the overall impact of the score is devastating. Much of the credit for this goes to the Berlin Radio Choir, which by now has made a specialty of the Henze Ninth; their virtuosity in this performance was even more awesome than it is on the superlative live world-premiere recording from EMI Classics. ■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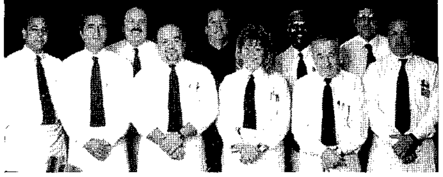

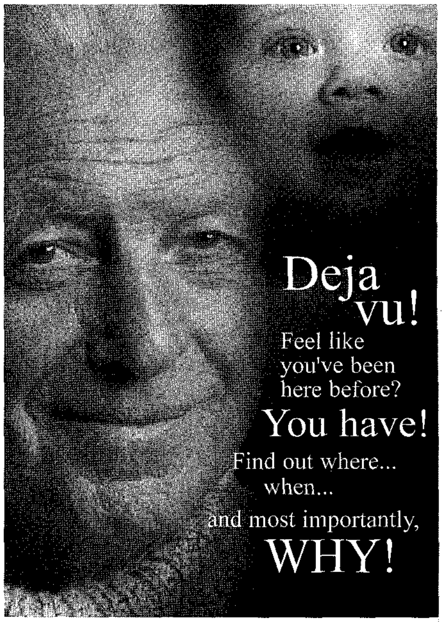
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TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

Monkey Business

NBC's *Lost Empire* revisits the ancient Chinese tale of the Monkey King, complete with martial-arts pyrotechnics; CBS's *Big Apple* looks like *NYPD Bluer.*

Simian says: Kick-worthy demons from *The Lost Empire.*

ANY MINI-SERIES THAT BEGINS in the underground chamber of the ancient Chinese terra-cotta warriors is okay by me. And when these statues actually begin to wink and nod, in anticipation of the Tinker Bell materializing of Kwan Ying, the Goddess of Mercy, I am a happy clam. While **The Lost Empire** had to have been in the works long before *Crouching Tiger, Inner Child* proved so remarkably popular on the big screen, it appeals to the same appetite for fabulism—the Robin Hood and Peter Pan in us, the Oz and Stargate.

Like Maxine Hong Kingston before him, David Henry Hwang (*M. Butterfly*) has written a riff on Wu Ch'eng-en's sixteenth-century novel *Journey to the West,* a sort of Chinese *Pilgrim's Progress* in which the Monkey King—a trickster who could assume at whim the forms of a falcon, a koi fish, and a cormorant—led a military expedition to bring back Buddha's sutras from India. As Wu, 500 years ago, was reimagining Hanuman, the Monkey Chief of the Ramayana who saved Sita from the demon Ravana, so Hong Kingston in *Tripmaster Monkey* reimagined him as Wittman Ah Sing, a draft-dodging playwright and "badass China bluesman" in sixties Berkeley bearing more than a passing resemblance to Abbie Hoffman, who sought to save America from the war in Vietnam. And so Hwang reimagines him yet again, as a warrior chief who needs a lot of help to save—not Sita, not the sutras, not America—but first, Wu's very own manuscript, and then the modern world.

All this is news to Nicholas Orton (Thomas Gibson), who quit his Chinese academic studies to become a "cowboy capitalist" in the emerging Asian markets. He is leading a client around the terra-cotta chamber with a view to turning the warrior tomb into a theme park, when the Goddess of Mercy (Bai Ling) appears to him. He is, she says, "the Scholar from Above," who can enter a parallel universe where "the lost empire" of sixteenth-century China still resides; lift the curse from the freeze-dried Monkey King (Russell Wong) and his lieutenants, Friar Sand (Kabir Bedi) and Pigsy (Eddie Muran); and rescue the manuscript of *Journey to the West* before it is burned by the evil emperor Shu (Randall Duk Kim). Should the book disappear, so will modernity.

The Lost Empire
Sunday March 11, 9 to 11 P.M.; Monday March 12, 8 to 10 P.M.; NBC.

Big Apple
Thursdays; 10 to 11 P.M.; CBS.

The Sopranos
Sundays; 9 to 10 P.M.; HBO.

Well, Gibson, Dharma's favorite Greg, would follow Bai Ling, a Chinese Audrey Hepburn, anywhere. And before you know it, with gee-whiz insouciance, through the combined miracles of classic Chinese literature and modern computer graphics, he will be skipping clouds, wrestling serpents, and being muscle-toned in the martial arts by Wong's own master, Subhodhi (Lim Kay Siu), the better to kick-box demons. There are jokes about about yin and yang, Mahatma Gandhi, Oz itself (could Frank Baum have read Wu?), and even "liberals" (that is, anybody who wants something different from sixteenth-century China). We will also meet Wu himself (Henry O), who suffers like all great writers from low self-esteem. It could be here that David Henry Hwang is working out personal guilt feelings about having deserted Philip Glass to rewrite the book for a revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Flower Drum Song.*

THAT **Big Apple**, THE NEW THURSDAY-NIGHT CBS series about cops and feds at war on organized crime and one another, wasn't ready for advance screening by reviewers for the weeklies and the monthlies suggested maybe a disaster in the making. Wrong again. The belated pilot, which is all I've seen, is every bit as sharp as anybody could have hoped from executive producers like David Milch (*NYPD*

Photograph by Hallmark Photo.

Blue) and Anthony Yerkovich (*Miami Vice*). A half-dozen characters and more than a thousand mixed emotions, ulterior motives, and conflicting agendas had to be introduced in 45 dark and stormy minutes, and they were—with a resonant shorthand and a minimalist dispatch.

So the cops (Ed O'Neill, Jeffrey Pierce, Michael Rispoli) and the FBI (David Strathairn, Titus Welliver, Glynn Turman, Kim Dickens) convene at a Park Avenue–penthouse crime scene, where the dead stripper somehow connects to a Hell's Kitchen "tit bar" where the feds have set up a sting on our old friends, the Russian Mafia, with or without the help of undercover informant Michael Madsen and his hot-headed protégé-thugee, Donnie Wahlberg. Strathairn, coming on a lot like Sam Waterson on *Law & Order*, is worried about Welliver, who is too close to Madsen, which is why the very blonde Dickens has been brought in to spy on the New York office. O'Neill hates the FBI on principle, dating back to "Hoover in a pinafore," but this time he has to work with them. There are wisecracks about everything from *Baywatch* to Sarajevo.

Big Apple is almost as dark as the late-lamented *EZ Streets*, but not so pitch-black that we can't see what's going on. The return to series television not only of Strathairn and O'Neill, but also of Anthony Yerkovich, who's been semi-missing in action since *Private Eye* went down the drain, is an occasion to be grateful for. Do we need such a show? No more than we need ten extra minutes of Monica, or yet another preachy sulk by Bobby on *The Practice*. But when it's done as well as *Big Apple* does it, it's like Eminem and Elton John. We can't help watching anyway.

WHILE MY ATTENTION WAS ELSEWHERE—Chris Rock came back from the dead in the body of Kevin Costner's Elvis?—**The Sopranos** returned for a third season. By now you already know that no sooner did Tony put Janice on a bus to Seattle than she was already back in New Jersey to attend their mother's funeral—the wake itself was worthy of Joyce and Finnegan. Joe Pantoliano joins the cast just in time to go completely bonkers on April 1. Christopher (Michael Imperioli) is at last promoted to "made man," at a ceremony at which they burn a saint's card. Peter Riegert guest-stars as a corrupt state assemblyman, and we are promised, as well, Charles S. Dutton and Anabella Sciorra.

Meanwhile, at Columbia, Tony's daughter Meadow (Jamie-Lynn Sigler) is about to lose her perspective and her virginity to an upperclassman (Patrick Tully) who happens to be, gasp, half-black. While you surely can't expect me to risk getting whacked with a spill of the Freudian beans about Tony's therapeutic breakthrough in the prim presence of Lorraine Bracco, I will hint (no big surprise) that the reason for his panic attacks will be traced back to his father, his mother, his traumatic childhood, cold cuts, finger food, and what Claude Lévi-Strauss would probably call "the raw and the cooked" of human sexuality.

TV Notes

Doc (March 11; 8 to 10 P.M.; PAX) is a two-hour pilot introducing a new series with country-music singer Billy Ray Cyrus as a Montana doctor who follows a magazine editor to New York, where nobody makes house calls and the whole city is almost as mean as an HMO.

Lorna Doone (March 11; 8 to 11 P.M.; A&E) is, never mind the Catholics and Protestants in seventeenth-century England, worth checking out for Amelia Warner in the title role—I will not reveal her true identity, but the outlaws stole her from a very high place of very great privilege—torn between a super-goody John Ridd (Richard Coyle) and an utterly evil Carver Doone (Aidan Gillen). This is the same peach who plays the convent girl in *Quills*, who was no sooner traduced by Michael Caine then she read *Justine* and ran off with her interior decorator.

Columbo: Murder With Too Many Notes (March 12; 8 to 10 P.M.; ABC) happily brings back not just Peter Falk, who at the age of 73 is older than his raincoat, but also Patrick McGoohan, who starred in a couple of memorable *Columbos* and who co-writes and directs this one, which is all about who should have gotten the credit and the Oscar for music Billy Connolly says he composed for the murder-mystery movies Charles Cioffi directs. Pay attention to the shoes.

The Familiar Stranger (March 12; 9 to 11 P.M.; Lifetime) lets Margaret Colin settle the hash of her husband, Jay O. Sanders, after he's embezzled funds from the local college, pretended to commit suicide, and left her and their two young sons to fend off guilt and bankruptcy, while he goes off to Kennebunkport, Maine, to steal somebody else's money. I would watch Colin in anything, so I watched her in this. ■

IN BRIEF: POP MUSIC ROBERT LEVINE

A SOUTHERN JAM-ROCK GROUP WITH A CULT FOLLOWING that sells out stadiums, the **Dave Matthews Band** has always been full of contradictions. Even when the Birkenstocked faithful were hearing the word via bootleg instead of *Billboard*, the group always rooted its instrumental excursions in rock instead of in the Frank Zappa-style weirdness of Phish or the bluegrass traditionalism of the Grateful Dead. And by 1998, it had a No. 1 album (*Before These Crowded Streets*), a bona fide rock star in the self-effacing Matthews, and hard-won status as an enduring band at a time when sugary teen pop and Spice Girls seemed to be pushing guitar rock into the margins. Not bad for a bunch of regular guys from Charlottesville—even if the critics never quite got what the college kids understand.

Still, like many of the latter-day hippie bands adherents swear "you just have to see live," the Dave Matthews Band never fully captured its airy spontaneity—those several-minute jams with soaring sax—on its studio albums. So on *Everyday* (RCA), it's stopped trying, opting to focus on tighter pop songs, Matthews's electric-guitar-playing, and a studio sheen from producer Glen Ballard (Alanis Morrisette, No Doubt, nineties Aerosmith), who co-wrote the songs with Matthews.

If nothing else, it's a gutsy move. *Everyday* is still plenty eclectic—"I'm mixing up a bunch of magic stuff," Matthews sings at the beginning of the first song. But the mixing of the album itself—perhaps because of Ballard's commercial instincts—casts Matthews way out in front, where he sounds like a singer-songwriter who doesn't have all that much to say (big questions: "Why do I beg like a child for your candy?" "Why can't I dream you away from me?"). And though the smarter songs (the more personal "If I Had It All," the easygoing "Fool to Think") benefit from the concision, the group's newfound musical sharpness isn't that of a world-class bar band but that of an outsize stadium act—all grand gesture and larger-than-life lyrics. Sometimes, as on "I Did It," the band recaptures the spirit of seventies rock in all its innocent fun. Other times, especially on the cloying, overdramatic "The Space Between," it recaptures only those moments that involve holding a lighter high above one's head. ■

RESTAURANTS ADAM PLATT

Tedium Rare

Tuscan Steak doesn't just smell like meat, it smells like money. And while it might be good for business, it's not all that appetizing. Jimmy's Uptown, on the other hand, is a bankable new star.

All the dining establishments in the world can be divided into two categories, a wise old restaurateur once told me. There is the obsession restaurant, which is run by its proprietor with a singular kind of fanatical devotion (Prune, 71 Clinton Fresh Food, etc.). Then there is the business restaurant, which is run as a business, often by several proprietors, to make lots of cash (Tavern on the Green, Burger King, etc.). An obsession restaurant can be sizable (witness the room at Le Bernardin), and a business restaurant can be small (your local diner). An obsession restaurant may devolve into a business restaurant, but a restaurant conceived purely as a business rarely turns into an obsession. And you don't have to be a wise old restaurateur to taste the difference right away.

In the case of **Tuscan Steak**, the new midtown megamall restaurant from Jeffrey Chodorow (China Grill, Asia de Cuba, Hudson Cafeteria), you can even *smell* the difference. It's the thick, industrial scent of truffle oil, mingled with traces of burnt fat. It swirls in the air on the sidewalk outside, above the limos and courtesy cars idling two and three deep. It smells of commerce instead of cooking, like the whiff of cigarette smoke hovering over a busy casino floor. Inside, the designer, Jeffrey Beers, has transformed the space—which once housed a bank—into a kind of swank, corporate ballroom. There are catwalk skyways, a mezzanine bar, and lots of roomy, Steven Seagal–era power banquettes made of shiny black vinyl. To control the mob of diners, stony-faced gentlemen troll the floor with listening devices stuck in their ears. Even our sommelier wore a wire, and when he departed, my wife gave a little frown. "I don't think I want to be Jennifer Lopez," she said, "not even for one night."

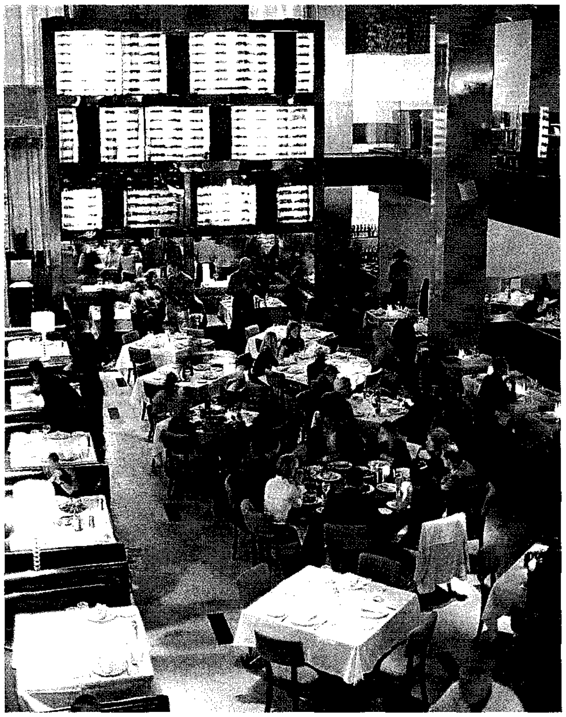
Possibly Jennifer Lopez has chewed her way through an entire 50-ounce serving of chef Dewey Losasso's "famous più grande grilled Florentine T-bone"—it's hard to know. Chef Losasso oversees the original Tuscan Steak restaurant in Miami, where he developed a voguish steakhouse version of Italian "family-style" cuisine. In this case, family-style is a euphemism for "tsunami-style," since the dishes are very large, and once they begin pelting down on the table, they don't stop. Within two minutes of ordering appetizers, our party was inundated with marshmallow-size gnocchis and enough gooey risottos to caulk a ship. Most of these dishes were recognizable, but a few, like a special beet-flavored risotto, gave off an eerie, Martian glow. My guests held steady under this strange gastronomic deluge, except for one demure Englishwoman, who momentarily lost her wits. "Let's leave," she murmured. "I feel like a guest at an extremely expensive gangster wedding."

Tuscan Steak
622 Third Avenue, at 40th Street (212-404-17000).

Jimmy's Uptown
2207 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard, near 131st Street (212-491-4000).

The food at Tuscan Steak isn't quite *that* bad, but it's not very good either. Chef Losasso's "famous white-truffle garlic bread" was fragrantly oily, but not worth the bull-market price tag of $13.50. The antipasto was an odd heavy lifter's mélange of salmon slivers, chunks of beets and fennel, and inedible squares of polenta. My favorite of the pastas was the veal cannelloni, dual torpedo tubes of ground veal, congealed in a creamy mushroom sauce, with flakes of Parmesan sprinkled on top. The dish was tasty but so violently rich, you felt almost embarrassed eating it, like a pimply adolescent snarfing a public bag of candy. Ditto the three-mushroom risotto, a wicked sludge of porcini, portobello, and shiitake mushrooms, bound together with slabs of Parmesan and more vats of white-truffle oil.

Tuscan fun: The dining room at Tuscan Steak.



We wrestled gamely with all this grub, but when the big beef platters hit the table, a few weaker souls (my wife, and the Englishwoman) threw in the towel. Chef Lasasso's steak dishes have that effect. They're dressed up in thick crusts of cheese and stuck with ostrich plumes of sage and rosemary, like faded opera stars. The famous T-bone tasted compulsively sweet (it's covered with an oily pestolike sauce and lemon rinds), but when I reordered it on a second visit, the meat seemed to have been recycled from the evening before. The roast duck was good, and so was the grilled lobster, despite a weirdly glowing sidecar of basil mashed potatoes. But

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

then, glitches happen when you're eating off an assembly line. The filet mignon ($38), veal chop ($40), and prime rib ($46) were all average cuts of meat, covered in thick toppings of red-wine sauce, and each one emerged from the kitchen blood-rare, despite our requests.

The crowd at Tuscan Steak is strictly expense account at lunchtime, and bridge-and-tunnel on boisterous weekend nights, when 600 or so diners swing through the gates. The wine cellar is not a cellar at all, but a "wine tower," floating opaquely above the dining room. The list of Italian wines is decent and not unreasonably priced, although you'll probably need several bottles to fortify yourself for the selection of goofy, towering desserts. The best of these was a densely chewy walnut torte; the worst was the "chocolate voyage," a bric-a-brac of bland chocolate ziggurats and stale mousse pies. Like most of the food at Tuscan Steak, this dish was built to be gazed upon instead of eaten. The fact that it looked ridiculous didn't keep the waitstaff from peddling it vigorously. After all, business is business.

> "The fact that the dish looked ridiculous didn't keep the waitstaff from peddling it vigorously."

I NEVER CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF JEFFREY Chodorow among the mob at Tuscan Steak. But you can't loiter for ten minutes at the bar in **Jimmy's Uptown**, or sit at one of the curved, half-moon banquettes, before Jimmy himself looms into view. "Jimmy" is Jimmy Rodriguez, a restaurateur in the old tradition of George Rector and Toots Shor. He's a glad-handing, big-suited impresario, a special friend to millionaire athletes, movie stars, and neighborhood grandmas. Compared with the wild, nightclub vibe at his Bronx Café, this latest venture is a decorous place. The space, on Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard, is filled with shiny French tabletops, white Lycra lamp shades, and glowing chairs made of pale-yellow Italian leather. You get a discombobulating sensation coming off the dimly lit sidewalk, like landing in a bit of Las Vegas.

The menu has a little twist to it, too. Jimmy calls his new cuisine "Latin-soul fusion." That means grilled slices of filet mignon perched on a neat mass of grits, flavored with horseradish and bacon fat. You'll also find corn-bread croutons in your Caesar salad, and a helping of hickory-smoked barbecue ribs, served as a dainty appetizer, with relish made from Bartlett pears. Chef Linda Japngie, who did time as a line cook at La Caravelle and a chef de partie at Bouley Bakery, has come up with other improbable combinations, like a macaroni-and-cheese soufflé, and a sizable portion of foie gras matched with sweet calabaza squash. The ribs I sampled were too dank to taste hickory-smoked, and the soufflé could have worked better going one way or the other, but the filet was decently cooked, and the foie gras tasted as original as many of the oddball foie gras experimentations percolating further downtown.

That's the novel concept behind Jimmy's Uptown, of course. "This is a little bit of SoHo in Harlem," says Jimmy. "It's like opening the first pizza stand in Little Italy; you can't miss." Judging by the hopping weeknight traffic, he's right. The crowd is a debonair mixture of elegant neighborhood couples and uptown aristocrats (Johnnie Cochran, Derek Jeter). Those who don't have a taste for SoHo can dine on plump catfish fillets (pecan-crusted, with tomato chutney) and a whopping pork tenderloin, smothered in plantain bread pudding, with a side of double-dipped fried okra. There's also an erratic but very reasonably priced wine list, and a seviche bar, serving, among other things, fresh king-crab legs with three kinds of dipping oil. The kitchen's specialty, though, is a series of elegantly down-home desserts. I liked the apple tart (with a rich buttery crust and fresh pecan ice cream), and the intensely caramelized Mexican tres leche torte. As for Jimmy, he's partial to the sweet-potato pie. Talking about it, he smiles a twinkly car-salesman smile. He looks like a man happy in his work. ■

Tuscan Steak Lunch, Monday through Friday 12 to 2:45 P.M.; dinner, Monday through Thursday 5 P.M. to 12 A.M., Friday and Saturday to 1 A.M., Sunday to 11 P.M. Appetizers, $12 to $18; entrées, $19 to $65. All major credit cards.

Jimmy's Uptown Dinner, Monday through Thursday 6 P.M. to 12 A.M., Friday and Saturday 6 P.M. to 2 A.M., Sunday 4 to 10 P.M. Appetizers, $7 to $15; entrées, $19 to $29. A.E., M.C., V.

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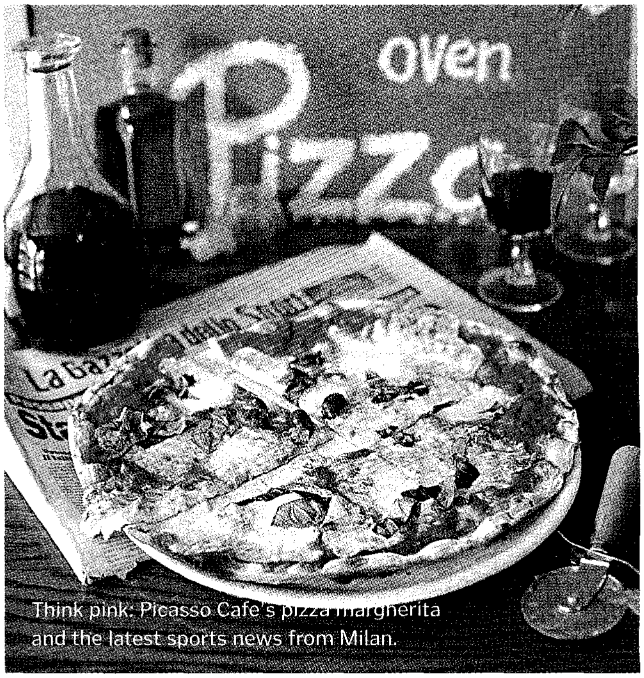
Paper Chase

Hungry for affordable Italian? Follow the telltale pink pages to Picasso Cafe and Caffè Linda for first-rate pizza and pasta—and the latest soccer scores.



Think pink: Picasso Cafe's pizza margherita and the latest sports news from Milan.

TO FIND GOOD FOOD AT BARgain prices, sometimes you have to look beyond what's written on the menu and engage in some Holmes-like sleuthing, a reading of the clues. There are the dead giveaways: Avoid a French bistro, for example, that tries to pass off bad bread. Or a Chinatown restaurant with a conspicuous lack of Chinese customers. But other signs are more subtle. It's useful to notice, especially in Italian restaurants of a certain unassuming nature, what people are reading. If you happen to notice someone riffling through the fuchsia pages of *La Gazzetta dello Sport,* you're in luck. The Milanese sports daily tends to be a familiar hot-pink presence wherever Italian expats congregate for a quick lunch or a leisurely dinner—a home away from home where they know the food will be reliably good and the welcome warm.

Michele (a.k.a. Michael) Colonna, chef-owner of the nine-month-old **Picasso Cafe**, says that everyone knows him for *La Gazzetta,* which he buys from a newsstand uptown and totes to work to share with his scorekeeping compatriots. *We* know him for his pizza—superbly charred, ultra-thin-crusted gems artfully arrayed with homemade mozzarella, mildly sweet tomato sauce, and the ideal ratio of topping to crust. Over the past decade, Colonna developed a following on Bleecker Street at Cafe Picasso (now under different management), a tiny room with a wood-burning brick oven and a leafy, romantic garden. But last year, a rent dispute with his landlord and the desire to expand his pizza-and-panini repertoire led him to a nondescript midtown block, where he and his sister Margherita Rotondi have room for a full kitchen, a spacious dining area decorated with a dorm's worth of Picasso prints, and a neighborhood that's gradually discovering the pizza maestro in its midst.

Colonna didn't start out as a chef. He was born in Puglia, moved to Borough Park, returned to his homeland for a brief stint as a professional soccer player, and then, back in New York, stumbled into the restaurant business as a deliveryman. But when he finally devoted himself to pizza at Cafe Picasso, he cultivated a loyal following of celebrity gourmands like Tobey Maguire and Richard Gere, as well as professional connoisseurs like Jim Lahey, owner of Sullivan Street Bakery and a trusted arbiter of all oven-baked things. It's a testament to Colonna's skill that his product hasn't suffered since smoke-sensitive neighbors on 29th Street persuaded him to switch from his wood-burning beehive oven to a bright-red electric-powered Italian import that has happily proved equally adept at charring the crust and melding the flavors of his top-notch ingredients.

Colonna's mother, Lina, bakes crusty round focaccia every morning, which her son transforms into crunchy bruschetta heaped with arugula and tomato (remarkably ripe for March), and delicious baked sandwiches, like the one with mortadella sliced thin and slathered with goat cheese. Margherita anticipates every need, and remembers every face that ever crossed the old Bleecker Street threshold. And here, Colonna has evolved from pizza man to full-fledged chef. He's beefed up his menu with grilled lamb chops seasoned with balsamic vinegar and sage, and fennel sausage grilled flat with garlicky broccoli rabe. He's filled out his modest wine selection with affordable bottles like a $21 Primitivo and an organic Montepulciano for $23. But despite his best, most ambitious efforts, Colonna just can't divert us from his pizza arrabbiata, lavished with spicy oil and dotted with olives, sun-dried tomatoes, and fragrant basil leaves. It's a beaut, and just the thing to tear even the most obsessed soccer fan away from his reading material.

Caffè Linda IS ANOTHER REFUGE FOR ITALian exiles hungering for good food and football scores, both delivered by owner Claudio Marini in the cozy, comfortable premises he named for his wife. Marini, a Ligurian native, drifted around Manhattan's Italian restaurants before teaming up with SoHo's Pepe Rosso partners when they invaded midtown to launch a basement café for Benetton. Eventually, he took over the operation, keeping the inexpensive panini and pasta that earned

Picasso Cafe
43 East 29th Street
(212-696-4488).

Caffè Linda
145 East 49th Street
(646-497-1818).

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

him and his cooks a repeat clientele of diamond-district workers, midtown desk jockeys, and the inevitable Italian contingent—all of whom mourned the closing of the original Caffè Linda last summer, and rejoiced when Marini reopened three blocks east six weeks ago.

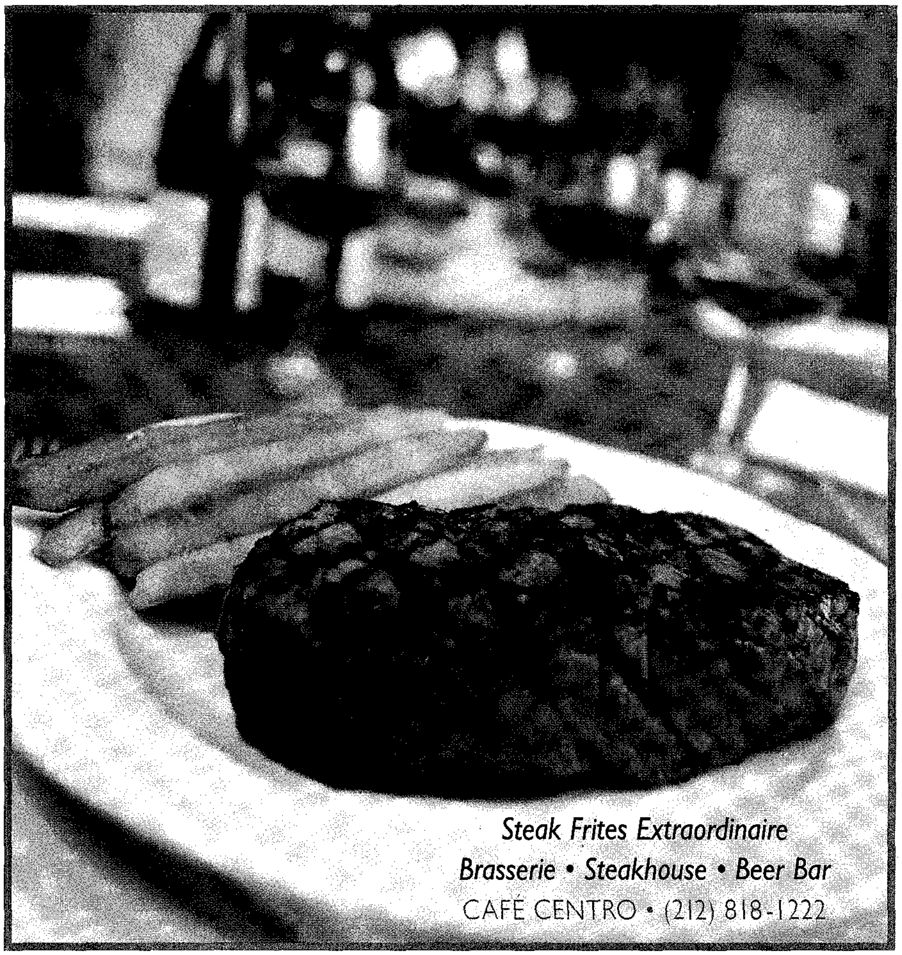
With enough space now for a real kitchen and a full bar, an affordable all-Italian wine list, and a seldom-seen Italian beer called Menabrea, there's even more reason to celebrate. Marini has expanded his hours of operation to include dinner—a boon for late-night office workers in an area where a good alternative to fancy expense-account restaurants is as hard to find as a cab at 5 P.M. In addition to the short list of standard entrées, which includes a juicy chicken Milanese buried in a tangle of chopped arugula and tomato, the kitchen turns out daily specials like hearty lamb and rabbit stews served with mashed potatoes.

But we're partial—if not addicted—to sandwiches like grilled chicken breast with roasted peppers and pesto on a warm, crusty baguette (lunch only), and especially the dozen or so exquisitely al dente pastas. We love the rigatoni meticulously tossed with fresh tomato, meltingly soft eggplant, and tangy ricotta salata; a rich and eggy penne carbonara; a toothsome pappardelle lightly dressed with pesto sauce; and an intensely meaty gnocchi Bolognese. But pay attention to the specials: If Marini touts the penne with Italian tuna and black olives, or spaghetti with baby clams in a garlicky white-wine sauce, by all means indulge him.

A gracious and charming host, Marini greets everyone personally and glides around the dining room, delivering dishes of complimentary bruschetta to begin the meal and sticks of Wrigley's Doublemint with the bill to end it. Not until the lunch crowd dissipates does he sit down to eat and immerse himself in *La Gazzetta*, or, as he calls it, "my Bible." The restaurant is closed on Sunday, the day Marini puts aside for the real Linda. That is, after he finishes watching Italian soccer on Channel 31, an immutable weekend routine. "After two," he tells his wife, "I'm all yours." ■

Picasso Cafe Lunch, Mon. through Sat. 11:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.; dinner, 6 to 11:30 P.M. Pizza, $10 to $12.50; entrées, $9.50 to $18. A.E., M.C., V.

Caffè Linda Breakfast, lunch, and dinner, Mon. through Sat. 8:30 A.M. to 11 P.M. Pasta and entrées, $7.95 to $16.95. AE, MC, V.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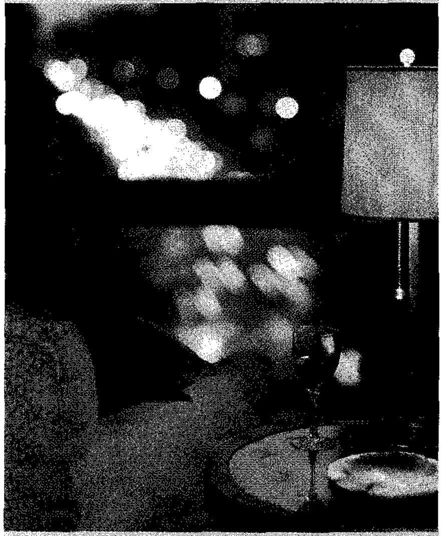

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Movies

Edited by Ben Kaplan

This Week's Releases

Blow Dry
Two happily no-longer-married hairdressers (Alan Richman, Natasha Richardson) compete for the English national championship. Also starring Rachael Leigh Cooke. (1 hr. 45 mins; R) • Opens 3/7.

Company Man
An entertaining look at American history as taught by a former writer for *Saturday Night Live*. Written and directed by Douglas McGrath; featuring Sigourney Weaver, John Tuturro, Alan Cumming, and more than a few very pleasant surprises. (1 hr. 20 mins; PG-13) • Opens 3/9.

Fifteen Minutes
Robert De Niro and Ed Burns team up to catch two Eastern European psychopaths who videotape their handiwork. Kelsey Grammer co-stars in writer-director John Herzfeld's (*2 Days in the Valley*) second feature film. (2 hrs.; R) • Opens 3/9.

Get Over It
Relatively tame high-school high jinks about a boy (Berke Lawrence) whose rebound girl happens to be his best friend's younger sister. Kirsten Dunst and Sisqo co-star. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 3/9

Hit and Runway
A crowd-pleasing comedy about an unlikely writing team's attempt at scripting a Hollywood smash. A cast of newcomers star in this independent film about sexuality, screenplays, and selling out. (1hr. 45 mins; R) • Opens 3/9.

Freedom's fighters: John Turturro and Sigourney Weaver in *Company Man*.

When Brandon Met Trudy
Peter McDonald (*I Went Down*, *Felicia's Journey*) and Flora Montgomery, in her film debut, replace Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan in this original, though homage-filled, romantic comedy that exchanges New York for Ireland and a Dublin pub for Katz's deli. (1hr. 35 mins.; NR) • Opens 3/9.

New Films

★ Almost Famous
Cameron Crowe's sweetly engaging coming-of-age movie about a 15-year-old rock journalist, played by Patrick Fugit, who hooks up with a touring, Led Zeppelin–ish band in order to write a cover story for *Rolling Stone*. (Rainer; 9/18/00) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) • The Screening Room; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; UA Gemini; Clearview's Cobble Hill.

★ Before Night Falls
Javier Bardem gives an astonishing, freewheeling performance as the gay Cuban literary exile Reinaldo Arenas, who in 1990 died in New York from AIDS. Julian Schnabel directs. (Rainer; 1/8/01) (2 hrs. 13 mins; R) • Quad Cinema; Clearview's Chelsea; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Pavilion; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Billy Elliot
A striking miner's son furtively studies ballet and eventually wins over his hard-nosed dad. (Rainer; 10/23/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • CC Village East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Kew Gardens Cinemas; North Shore Towers.

★ Cast Away
Tom Hanks plays a FedEx systems engineer who is stranded on a remote and uninhabited island in the South Pacific in this Robert Zemeckis film. (Rainer; 12/25/00) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; CO Cinema City; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.

★ Charlie's Angels
Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore, and Lucy Liu play the new generation of Angels in this daffy, spirited movie. (Rainer; 11/7/00) (1 hr. 43 mins.; PG) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

Chocolat
Juliette Binoche plays the owner of a chocolate shop whose dainties bewitch a small town. Co-stars Johnny Depp and Alfred Molina; Lasse Hallström directs. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Angelika Film Center; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Sony Lincoln Square; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; CO Alpine; UA Marboro; CO Fresh Meadows; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

★ Chunhyang
The veteran Korean director Im Kwon Taek renders a masterful take on an eighteenth-century folk tale. (Rainer; 1/08/01) (2 hrs.; NR) • The Screening Room.

★ Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon
Set in nineteenth-century China, this Ang Lee movie is a ravishing martial-arts romance with sequences as magical as anything in the movies. (Rainer; 12/11/00) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; UA Gemini; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; BAM Rose Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill; CO Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Down to Earth
Chris Rock plays an amateur comedian and bicycle messenger who is mistakenly whisked to Heaven by an angel and returned to Earth to inhabit the just-murdered body of a white Park Avenue billionaire. (Rainer; 2/26/01) (1 hr. 34 mins; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; CO Fresh Meadows; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

Dude, Where's My Car?
Ashton Kutcher and Seann William Scott co-star in this raunchy road film, which involves pudding, angry girlfriends, and amnesia. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

Faithless
Liv Ullmann directs but does not appear in this drama of the anguish of infidelity scripted by Ingmar Bergman. (Rainer; 2/5/01) (2 hrs. 22 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

Finding Forrester
Yet another tale from director Gus Van Sant about a kindly mentor (Sean Connery) who helps a troubled-though-brilliant student (Rob Brown) get his life together. (2 hrs. 16 mins.; PG-13) • AMC Empire 25 Theatres; UA Gemini.

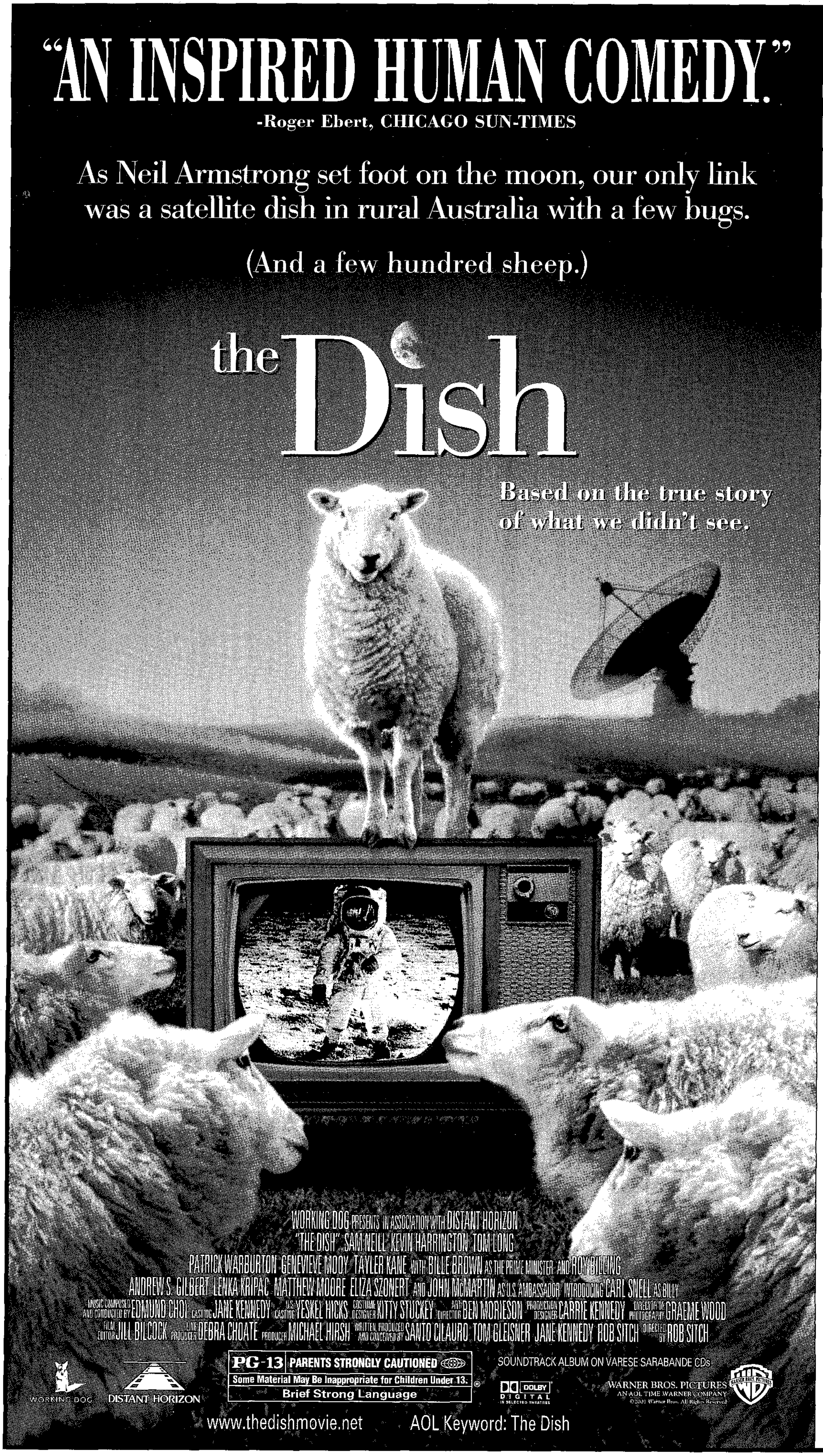
The Gift
Cate Blanchett is a seer in a Georgia bayou whose readings for troubled local townsfolk are more like social-service sessions. Giovanni Ribisi, Hilary Swank, and Keanu Reeves are good in supporting roles. (Rainer; 1/29/01) (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) • UA Union

Opening

Only in New York, Kids

Oleg Razgul checks into a motel under the name Frank Capra. Emil Slovak allows his Eastern European cohort to videotape him in preparation for an insanity plea. In ***15 Minutes****, these two wild-and-crazy killers are loose in Manhattan, and veteran cop Eddie Flemming (Robert De Niro) and arson investigator Jordy Warsaw (Edward Burns), pictured, must stop them. It's like* Miami Vice*, except with music by Moby instead of Phil Collins, and a beleaguered Kelsey Grammer adding subtext as a tabloid-show anchor who values ratings above all. During the inevitable chaos and explosions, Oleg and Emil learn very quickly that being a homicidal maniac is anything but a Wonderful Life. Begins March 9.*

Photographs: top, courtesy of Paramount Classics; bottom, by P. V. Caruso/New Line/SMPSP.



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-Roger Ebert, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

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Ground Rules

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer. Stars (★) denote current releases that New York recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. Reviews are followed by the names of theaters where the film is playing.

Square; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square.

★ Gladiator
Ridley Scott's latest is an attempt to make a Roman epic on the scale of *Spartacus* or *Ben-Hur* while, at the same time, presenting us with a hero, Russell Crowe's Maximus, who is monumentally withdrawn. (Rainer; 5/15/00) (2 hrs. 30 mins.; R) • CC Village East; CC Crown Gotham; Loews State.

Hannibal
Anthony Hopkins is a plumper, more princely cannibal Hannibal Lecter this time out, and he's also more cartoonized—a figure of grisly fun. Julianne Moore replaces Jodie Foster as FBI agent Clarice Starling, and she gives a clenched-jaw performance that is skillful but out of keeping with the tone of flamboyant Grand Guignol burlesque. (Rainer; 2/19/01) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Astor Plaza; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO Alpine; CO Kings Plaza; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; CO Fresh Meadows; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Head Over Heels
Monica Potter stars as a single city girl who unwittingly moves into an apartment with four gorgeous supermodels. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG-13) • Loews New York Twin.

★ The House of Mirth
In Terence Davies's rigorously elegant adaptation of Edith Wharton's novel set in 1905 New York, Gillian Anderson is Lily Bart, the socialite who is undone by the society she wants to become a part of. (Rainer; 1/1/01) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; NR) • Quad Cinema; CC Eastside Playhouse.

In the Mood for Love
Tony Leung and Maggie Cheung play neighbors whose respective spouses are having an affair. (Rainer; 2/6/01) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Angelika Film Center; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

★ Last Resort
A becomingly modest movie about a Russian refugee (Dina Korzun) and her 10-year-old son (Artiom Strelnikov) living in a bleak holding area in an English seaside community. (Rainer; 2/26/01) (1 hr. 15 mins; NR) • Loews State.

Maléna
Giuseppe Tornatore directs this tragicomedy about a chic, mysterious woman (Monica Bellucci). Guiseppe Sulfaro stars as the man who's been obsessed with her since he was 13. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) • CC Village East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Cinemart.

Me You Them
A Brazilian true story about a woman (Regina Case) and her three "husbands." (1hr. 36 mins.; PG-13) • Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

★ Meet the Parents
Lots of dumb jokes and misfires, but the rapport between Ben Stiller, playing a prospective son-in-law, and Robert De Niro, as the martinet father of his girlfriend, is rich. (Rainer; 10/9/00) (1 hr. 48 mins.; PG-13) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

Miss Congeniality
A tomboy FBI agent (Sandra Bullock) must learn how to be glamorous to go undercover as a beauty-pageant contestant. Co-stars Candice Bergen and Michael Caine. (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) • AMC Empire 25 Theatres.

Monkeybone
A succesful cartoonist (Brendan Fraser) falls into a coma, and his spirit is transported to an odd limbo in which he must outwit death (Whoopi Goldberg). (2 hrs.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea West; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; CO Cinema City; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

★ O Brother, Where Art Thou?
Set in Depression-era Mississippi, this Coen brothers movie actually takes place in their usual rarefied and icy-hot postmodern Nowheresville. George Clooney, John Turturro, and Tim Blake Nelson star as escaped convicts. (1 hr. 46 mins.; PG-13) • UA Union Square; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CC Sutton; Sony Lincoln Square; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

★ The Pledge
Sean Penn directed this movie starring Jack Nicholson as a retired Nevada homicide detective who can't let go of a hunch that a killer of young girls is still roaming free. (Rainer; 1/15/00) (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) • UA Union Square; Loews New York Twin; Loews 84th Street.

The Price of Milk
New Zealander Harry Sinclair's movie about two young lovers is set against verdant valleys and brings into the mix mysterious crones, Maori golfers, children's shoes, stolen quilts, and dairy cows. Mostly it's unmagical magical realism. (Rainer; 2/26/01) (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) • CC Angelika Film Center; CC Sutton.

★ Quills
Philip Kaufman's movie about the Marquis de Sade, played by Geoffrey Rush, written by Doug Wright from his Obie-winning play, is a voluptuous impasto that mixes together angels and demons in a richly ambiguous swirl. (Rainer; 11/27/00) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • CC Village East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres.

Recess: School's Out
Allyce Beasley, Dabney Coleman, and Jason Davis lend their voices to this animated film about an evil high-school principal who aspires to eradicate summer vacation by using a special laser gun. (1 hr. 22 mins.; G) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; CO Cinema City; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Requiem for a Dream
Darren Aronofsky's controversial adaptation of the Hubert Selby Jr. novel, which tells four parallel stories all dealing with addiction. Starring Ellen Burstyn, Jared Leto, and Jennifer Connelly. (1 hr. 42 mins.; NR) • Quad Cinema; AMC Empire 25 Theatres.

Rugrats in Paris: The Movie
Those especially shrill animated children from the popular TV show shriek and bleat their way onto the big screen. (1 hr. 18 mins.; G) • CO Worldwide Cinemas; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas.

Save the Last Dance
This romantic drama stars Julia Stiles as a young midwestern dance student who moves to Chicago after her mother dies in an automobile accident. (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Cinemart; CO Cinema City; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II.

Saving Silverman
Two friends try to stop their buddy from marrying the wrong woman. Starring Jason Biggs, Amanda Peet, and Neil Diamond as himself. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG-13) • UA Union Square; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CO Alpine; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.

See Spot Run
First-time film from TV director John Whitesell (*A Different World, Jack and Jill*) about a highly intelligent FBI dog and his dim-witted master, convincingly voiced by David Arquette. (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG) • Loews Village; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea West; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Ca-

Festival

Fight the Power

To paraphrase Sean Penn, movies should do more than just entertain. Through March 23, the Museum of Modern Art's **The Path of Resistance** honors that notion, presenting 75 films from the mid-sixties to the present day that serve as social critique. American films, documentaries, and shorts are interspersed with selections from China, Senegal, and Brazil, and directors like Roman Polanski and Jean-Luc Godard, whose *Le Petit Soldat* is pictured, join Emmy winner Marlon Riggs, who airs the excellent, heartbreaking *Tongues Untied* this Saturday at 5:30. For a complete schedule of the films, which are arranged around common themes (March 11 focuses on the American Midwest, March 13 on films shot in Australia), visit www.moma.org. However, be wary—expect aisles filled with Che Guevara T-shirts and creative facial hair. Through March 23. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.

narsie; Centre Sunnyside; CO Fresh Meadows; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza.

Series 7: The Contenders
Daniel Minahin's take-off on reality-TV shows is about a hit series where randomly selected contenders are pitted against each other until only one survives. (Rainer; 3/12/01) (1hr. 25 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center.

★ Shadow of the Vampire
Willem Dafoe triumphs as the actor-vampire Max Schreck in this uneven but sometimes chilling and witty film; John Malkovich co-stars as Murnau, and he's convincingly Teutonic. (Rainer; 1/8/01) (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) • UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews State.

Snatch
Guy Ritchie's film is about warring factions of London gangsters and is more exhausting than exhilarating. Benicio Del Toro and Brad Pitt are two of the films more recognizable faces. (Rainer; 1/29/01) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Clearview's Waverly; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.

Southern Comfort
Kate Davis directs this documentary about Robert Eads, a female-to-male transsexual who struggles with ovarian cancer. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • Film Forum.

★ State and Main
David Mamet's movie about a Hollywood movie crew invading a New England village has its share of syncopated nastiness and sharp satire, although the overall effect is surprisingly mild. (Rainer; 1/2/01) (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) • UA Union Square.

Sweet November
An ambitious executive (Keanu Reeves) sets up an unorthodox relationship with a young free spirit (Charlize Theron): a one-month trial relationship with no strings attached. (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Loews Coronet; Sony Lincoln Square; CO Alpine; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; CO Cinema City; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

The Taste of Others
A successful businessman (Jean-Pierre Bacri) becomes immersed in the world of theater only to be gleefully taken advantage of by a cavalcade of artists. (1 hr. 52 mins.; NR) • CC Village East; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Pavilion; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

★ Terrorists in Retirement
This documentary about mostly Jewish immigrant Resistance fighters has some startling interview material that bolsters the film's notion that the French Communists betrayed these fighters to the Nazis for being insufficiently French. (Rainer; 1/15/00) (1 hr. 24 mins.; NR) • Film Forum.

The Caveman's Valentine
The second collaboration between Samuel L. Jackson and director Kasi Lemmons, about a homeless man's supernatural search for a child's killer. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • UA Union Square; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Sony Lincoln Square.

The Gospel According to Phillip K. Dick
Mark Steensland's documentary examines the life and highly esoteric notions of science-fiction writer Philip K. Dick. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

The Mexican
Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts star in this lackadaisical action comedy about a feckless bagman for the mob and his errant girlfriend. James Gandolfini gives the film its powerful moments. (Rainer, 3/12/01) (2 hrs.; R) • Clearview's Ziegfeld; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Beekman; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; CO Fresh Meadows; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

The Widow of St. Pierre
Patrice Leconte's austere period drama about a condemned man (Emir Kusturica) and the French commandant (Daniel Auteuil) and his wife (Juliette Binoche) who minister to him. (Rainer; 3/5/01) (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) • Paris Theatre.

★ Thirteen Days
A workmanlike but engrossing docudrama-style depiction of how the Kennedy White House dealt with the Cuban Missile Crisis. Kenny O'Donnell, as played by Kevin Costner, has a Boston accent that could use some coaching, but the skewed perspective of this insider-outsider gives the material a fresh twist. (Rainer; 1/2/01) (2 hrs. 15 mins.; R) • Loews 19th St. East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Loews 84th Street.

3000 Miles to Graceland
Kevin Costner and Kurt Russell star as two crooks in Las Vegas who dress up as Elvis impersonators in the hopes of getting away with millions. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) (Rainer; 2/23) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Coronet; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; CO Cinema City; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

★ Traffic
Steven Soderbergh directed this uneven mélange—a movie about drug trafficking, in which several seemingly disparate stories come together. Much of it is smartly observed, and the cast is impressive, including Michael Douglas, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Benicio Del Toro, Don Cheadle, and many others. (Rainer; 1/2/01) (2 hrs. 20 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews 72nd St. East; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; BAM Rose Cinemas; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; CO Fresh Meadows; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

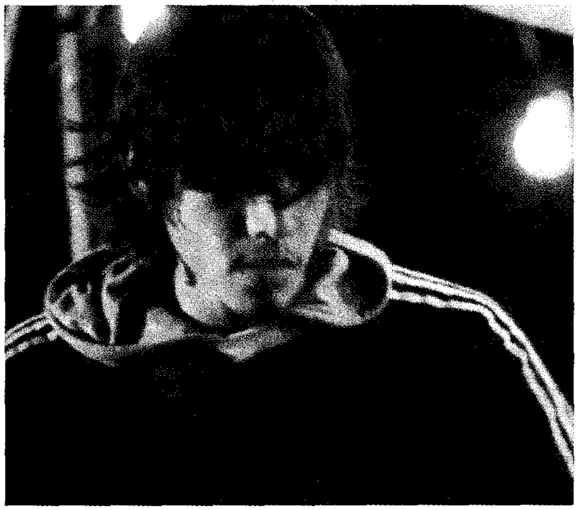
Valentine
David Boreanaz and Denise Richards star in this slasher film involving psychotic Valentine's Day cards and a creepy killer. (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) • AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone.

Vertical Limit
Chris O'Donnell stars as a climber who must rescue his sister atop the peaks of K2, one of the world's highest and most treacherous mountains. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

The Wedding Planner
The ubiquitous Jennifer Lopez stars as a San Franciscan wedding planner who's trying to balance her career and a romance with a swarthy do-gooder (Matthew McConaughey). (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East; Clearview's Chelsea West; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; UA Gemini; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; CO Alpine; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; CO Cinema City; North Shore Towers; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; Atrium; UA

Sundance-on-the-Subway

When does "amateur" filmmaking turn into "underground" cinema? Nominally, the underground deals with sex, drugs, and violence—turf nowadays not far removed from an Eminem freestyle—but that's only half the story. "I think the difference between underground and amateur film is the level of obsession," Ed Halter, the director of the **New York Underground Film Festival** since 1995, says. "A very obsessed amateur filmmaker can make a terrific underground film." At the eighth annual festivities, opening March 7 at the Anthology Film Archives, the underground films are expectedly shocking, but also subtle and powerful, where nuances of jazz mix with power chords of punk and conquer the style-over-content gap. This year's motley seven-day festival includes feature-length films and documentaries, as well as over 100 shorts from locales as distant as China and Norway but mostly from America's dark places: a prodigal New York chess champion brain-deadened from LSD in Aaron Lubarsky's *Uncle Eugene;* a graphic look at barbed-wire backyard wrestling in Illinois in Jon Leone's *Receiver;* a desperately materialistic Miami stripper in septuagenarian Doris Wishman's *Satan Was a Lady;* and as many killers, junkies, and streetwalkers as in anything by Marilyn Manson (who was spotted at the '99 show). "Underground films were synonymous with the independent movement during the sixties," Halter says, "but with independent films shifting into the mainstream, and film festivals like Sundance basically serving Hollywood, I think our festival is important now more than ever." So sit back, relax, pop your eight or nine Ritalin, and let the displaced obsessives show you their world. BEN KAPLAN

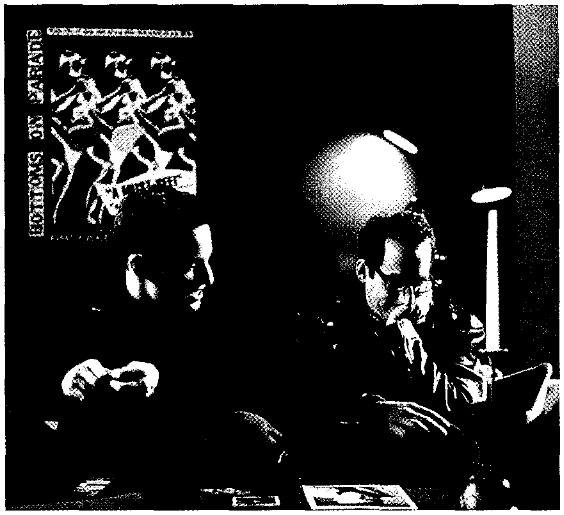


Photograph courtesy of NYUFF.

Opening

Fashion Victims

For Christopher Livingston and Jaffe Cohen, the story behind **Hit and Runway**, a comedy about the loves and lives of a hetero- and homosexual writing team, is a case of art imitating life imitating art. For their first feature, loosely about themselves, they tried to create the most preposterous screenplay imaginable for their characters to work on. "It was about an undercover cop posing as a model to infiltrate drugs in the fashion industry," Livingston (the straight half of the real-life team) says. But while they were shopping the film, Hollywood got other ideas. "We ended up taking meetings about the film within our film," Cohen, portrayed by Peter Jacobson, pictured here with Kerr Smith, says. "It was incredible. Here was an obvious joke—models transporting cocaine in their implants—yet we ended up developing a pilot for a Hollywood company!" *Hit and Runway* (the version Livingston and Cohen intended, that is) opens March 9 at the Quad, Sutton, and Clearview's Chelsea.



Photograph by Josh Solson.

Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

What Women Want
A male-chauvinist pig (Mel Gibson) gets the ability to read women's minds. Co-stars Helen Hunt. (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG-13) • Loews State; Cinemart.

★ **Wonder Boys**
A superb comedy, starring Michael Douglas as a college creative-writing professor in Pittsburgh whose wife has walked out on him. Tobey Maguire co-stars as the student who acts as a kind of surrogate son/comrade-in-arms. (Rainer; 3/6/00) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

Yi Yi
Edward Yang's complicated tale examining the relationship between a mother and son, and the nature of family in general. (2 hrs. 53 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

★ **You Can Count On Me**
Writer-director Kenneth Lonergen's wonderfully small-scale movie stars Mark Ruffalo and Laura Linney as reunited brother and sister, and theirs is one of the most convincing portrayals of family connection I've ever seen. (Rainer; 10/23/00) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) • CC Village East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Kew Gardens Cinemas; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Battery Park City Cinema
102 North End Ave. (212-945-3418) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; In the Mood for Love; Monkeybone; O Brother, Where Art Thou? ; Recess: School's Out; Save the Last Dance; Saving Silverman; Snatch; Sweet November; Traffic; The Wedding Planner.

CC Angelika Film Center
18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) • Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; In the Mood for Love; Pollock; The Price of Milk; Series 7: The Contenders.

CC Village East
189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) • Billy Elliot; Gladiator; Maléna; Quills; Recess: School's Out; The Taste of Others; The Wedding Planner; You Can Count On Me.

Cinema Village
22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) • Faithless; Nico & Dani; The Gospel According to Phillip K. Dick; Yi Yi.

Clearview's Waverly
323 Sixth Ave. (212-777-FILM#603) • Hannibal; Snatch.

Film Forum
209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) • Come and See; Southern Comfort; Terrorists in Retirement; The Gleaners and I. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Loews Village
66 Third Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#952) • Down to Earth; See Spot Run; Sweet November; Traffic.

Quad Cinema
34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) • Before Night Falls; The House of Mirth; Me You Them; Requiem for a Dream.

The Screening Room
54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) • Almost Famous; Chunhyang. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square
13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; The Gift; Hannibal; Monkeybone; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; The Pledge; Saving Silverman; See Spot Run; Shadow of the Vampire; State and Main; The Caveman's Valentine.

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas
160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; In the Mood for Love; Monkeybone; Shadow of the Vampire.

Clearview's Chelsea
260 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#597) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Before Night Falls; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Hannibal; Pollock; Traffic.

Clearview's Chelsea West
333 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#614) • Monkeybone; See Spot Run; The Wedding Planner.

Loews 19th St. East
890 Broadway, at 19th St. (212-50-LOEWS#858) • Down to Earth; Sweet November; Thirteen Days; The Wedding Planner.

Loews Kips Bay Theatre
570 Second Ave. (212-505–6397#558) • Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; The Gift; Hannibal; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Recess: School's Out; Save the Last Dance; Snatch; Sweet November; Traffic; The Wedding Planner.

42nd–60th Streets

AMC Empire 25 Theatres
234 W. 42nd St., at Eighth Ave. (212-398-3939) • Almost Famous; Before Night Falls; Billy Elliot; Blow Dry; Cast Away; Chocolat; The Emperor's New Groove; Finding Forrester; Into the Arms of Strangers; Maléna; Miss Congeniality; Monkeybone; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Pollock; Quills; Recess: School's Out; Recess: School's Out; Requiem for a Dream; Save the Last Dance; Saving Silverman; See Spot Run; Sweet November; Thirteen Days; Valentine; The Wedding Planner; You Can Count On Me.

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3
1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) • Before Night Falls; Chocolat; Maléna.

CC Crown Gotham
969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) • Gladiator.

CC Eastside Playhouse
919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) • The House of Mirth.

CC Sutton
205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) • O Brother, Where Art Thou?; The Price of Milk.

Clearview's 59th Street East
239 E. 59th St. (212-777-FILM#615) • 17th Israel Film Festival.

Clearview's Ziegfeld
141 W. 54th St. (212-777-FILM#602) • The Mexican.

CO Worldwide Cinemas
340 W. 50th St. (212-505-CINE#610) • Charlie's Angels; Dude, Where's My Car?; Meet the Parents; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Vertical Limit; Wonder Boys.

Loews 42nd Street E Walk
42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#572) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; The Gift; Snatch; The Caveman's Valentine; The Mexican; Traffic.

Loews Astor Plaza
44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#699) • Hannibal.

Loews Coronet
993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (212-505-CINE#608) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Sweet November.

Loews State
1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#901) • Gladiator; Last Resort; Shadow of the Vampire; Sing-a-long Sound of Music; What Women Want.

Paris Theatre
4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) • The Widow of St. Pierre.

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East
210 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#763) • Chocolat; Chocolat; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Recess: School's Out; The Wedding Planner.

Clearview's Beekman
1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (212-777-FILM#606) • The Mexican.

Clearview's First & 62nd St.
400 E. 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#957) • Cast Away; The Gift; Hannibal; In the Mood for Love; Monkeybone; Pollock; See Spot Run; Snatch; You Can Count On Me.

Clearview's Park and 86th St.
125 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#604) • Monkeybone; Thirteen Days.

Loews 72nd St. East
1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#704) • Traffic.

Loews New York Twin
1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#698) • Head Over Heels; The Pledge.

Loews Orpheum 7
1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (212-50-LOEWS#964) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Down to Earth; Hannibal; See Spot Run; The Mexican; Traffic.

UA East
1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) • The Contender.

UA Gemini
1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) • Almost Famous; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Finding Forrester; The Wedding Planner.

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway
1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#864) • You Can Count On Me.

Clearview's Metro Cinema
2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (212-777-FILM#609) • Down to Earth; Traffic.

Clearview's Olympia
2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (212-777-FILM#613) • Hannibal.

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas
30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) • Before Night Falls; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; In the Mood for Love; Me You Them; Pollock; The Taste of Others.

Loews 84th Street
2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (212-50-LOEWS#701) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Down to Earth; The Pledge; See Spot Run; Thirteen Days; The Wedding Planner.

Magic Johnson Harlem USA
300 W. 125th St. (212-665-8733) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; Save the Last Dance.

New Coliseum
701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) • Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; See Spot Run.

Nova
3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) • Down to Earth; Hannibal; See Spot Run.

Sony Lincoln Square
1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-50-LOEWS#638) • Chocolat; The Gift; Hannibal; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Recess: School's Out; Sweet November; The Caveman's Valentine; The Mexican; Traffic.

Bronx

Bay Plaza
2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (718-777-FILM#833) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; The Mexican; Traffic; Valentine; The Wedding Planner.

Concourse Plaza
214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; Save the Last Dance; See Spot Run; The Mexican; Valentine.

Whitestone
2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; Save the Last Dance; See Spot Run; The Mexican; Traffic; Valentine; The Wedding Planner.

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas
30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770) • Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; In the Mood for Love; Traffic. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights
70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) • Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Traffic.

Canarsie
9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) • Down to Earth; Hannibal; See Spot Run.

Clearview's Cobble Hill
265 Court St. (718-596-9113) • Almost Famous; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Pollock.

Trailers

MANHATTAN MOVIE MYSTERY DreamWorks has yet another **Woody Allen** movie in development, set to go into production in New York as soon as *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion* wraps; the secretive director's lips are sealed as to details, but **Téa Leoni, Debra Messing** (*Will & Grace*), and **Treat Williams** (*Critical Mass*) are all confirmed to star.

BAD COP Al Pacino has agreed to star in Alcon Entertainment's *Insomnia* with director **Chris Nolan** (*Memento*); in the thriller, a remake of a 1997 Norwegian film of the same title, Pacino will play an investigator lured into corruption by the very criminal he's trying to take down; **Hilary Swank** will co-star as a suspicious rookie cop; Witt-Thomas and Section Eight will produce.

EMERALD ISLE *Ash Wednesday* will go into production in Gotham about a month after the actual holy day, with **Edward Burns** to direct, star, and co-produce with **Margot Bridger** (*Sidewalks of New York*); the Independent Film Channel production, co-starring **Rosario Dawson** (also from *Sidewalks*) and **Oliver Platt**, focuses on two brothers living in eighties Manhattan as they try to cope with their violent Irish gangland histories.

A QUEENS TALE Hart Sharp Entertainment, co-producers of critically acclaimed films like *You Can Count On Me* and *Boys Don't Cry*, has a new project in the works: *The Women's Maintenance Club*, a film based on the true story of four women from Queens who form a club to take on the duties their lazy husbands fail to fulfill; **Charles Randolph-Wright** is writing the script. SARA CARDACE

Photographs: top, by Tricia Meadows/Globe Photos; bottom, by Fitzroy Barrett/Globe Photos.

Solutions to last week's puzzles

■	C	H	E	Q	U	E	R	E	D	F	L	A	G	■
B	■	I	■	U	■	X	■	N	■	I	■	M	■	S
O	D	D	M	A	N	O	U	T	■	R	E	A	L	M
X	■	E	■	R	■	G	■	W	■	S	■	T	■	O
T	R	Y	S	T	■	A	B	I	T	T	H	I	C	K
H	■	H	■	■	■	M	■	N	■	F	■	■	■	E
E	C	O	N	O	M	Y	■	E	P	O	C	H	A	L
C	■	L	■	V	■	■	■	■	■	O	■	I	■	E
O	N	E	S	E	L	F	■	A	N	T	I	B	E	S
M	■	■	■	R	■	E	■	G	■	■	■	E	■	S
P	L	A	N	E	T	R	E	E	■	H	E	R	T	Z
A	■	L	■	A	■	R	■	L	■	E	■	N	■	O
S	P	L	I	T	■	A	D	O	R	A	T	I	O	N
S	■	U	■	E	■	R	■	N	■	V	■	A	■	E
■	S	P	I	N	N	I	N	G	J	E	N	N	Y	■

A	S	C	A	P	■	■	O	P	E	R	A	■	■	■	R	E	A	G	A	N
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S	A	C	■	T	R	I	O	■	R	E	L	A	P	S	E	■	■	D	I	T
■	■	S	O	A	N	D	S	O	■	G	O	S	H	■	R	A	C	H	E	L
O	Z	A	R	K	S	■	■	A	P	E	■	H	I	P	■	C	L	U	R	E
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CO Alpine
6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (718-777-FILM#580) • Recess: School's Out ; Call theater for showtimes; Chocolat; Hannibal; Saving Silverman; Sweet November; The Wedding Planner.

CO Fortway
6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (718-777-FILM#578) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Call theater for showtimes; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Save the Last Dance; Traffic.

CO Kings Plaza
5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (718-777-FILM#579) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess the movie: School's Out ; Save the Last Dance.

CO Kingsway
946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (718-777-FILM#577) • Call theater for showtimes.

Kent Triplex
Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) • Hannibal; See Spot Run; The Mexican.

Linden Boulevard Multiplex
Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Save the Last Dance; See Spot Run; The Mexican; Traffic; The Wedding Planner.

Pavilion
188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Before Night Falls; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; The Taste of Others; The Mexican; Traffic.

Ridgewood
55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) • Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; The Mexican.

UA Marboro
6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) • Chocolat; Hannibal; The Mexican.

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay
3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; Sweet November; The Mexican; The Wedding Planner.

Queens

Centre Sunnyside
42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; See Spot Run; The Mexican.

Cinemart
106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) • Maléna; Nico and Dani; Save the Last Dance; Sugar and Spice; What Women Want.

CO Cinema City
183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (718-777-FILM#592) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Call theater for showtimes; Cast Away; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; Save the Last Dance; Sweet November; The Wedding Planner.

CO Fresh Meadows
Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (718-777-FILM#619) • Call theater for showtimes; Chocolat; Down to Earth; Hannibal; See Spot Run; The Mexican; Traffic.

College Point Multiplex
28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; Sweet November; The Mexican; Traffic; The Wedding Planner.

Jackson Triplex
82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-718-478-6777) • Down to Earth; Hannibal; See Spot Run.

Kaufman Astoria Cinema
38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Hannibal; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Recess: School's Out; Saving Silverman; See Spot Run; Snatch; The Mexican; Traffic.

Kew Gardens Cinemas
81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) • Before Night Falls; Billy Elliot; In the Mood for Love; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Pollock; The Taste of Others; You Can Count On Me.

Main Street Cinemas
72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Chocolat; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; See Spot Run; The Mexican.

North Shore Towers
27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) • Billy Elliot; Left Luggage; The Wedding Planner.

Plaza
103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) • Recess: School's Out; The Mexican.

Sony Bay Terrace
211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (718-777-FILM#712) • Call theater for showtimes.

Sony Elmwood
57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (718-777-FILM#733) • Call theater for showtimes.

UA Astoria
28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) • Down to Earth; Monkeybone; Save the Last Dance; Sweet November; The Wedding Planner.

UA Brandon Cinema
70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) • Sweet November; Traffic.

UA Crossbay
94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Down to Earth; Monkeybone.

UA Crossbay II
92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) • Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Hannibal; Recess: School's Out; Save the Last Dance; See Spot Run; Sweet November; The Mexican; The Wedding Planner.

UA Midway
108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; Chocolat; Hannibal; Monkeybone; See Spot Run; The Mexican.

UA Movies at Bayside
38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Down to Earth; Monkeybone; The Wedding Planner.

UA Movieworld
242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; The Mexican.

Staten Island

Atrium
680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Chocolat; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; Sweet November; The Mexican; Traffic; The Wedding Planner.

UA Hylan Plaza
107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Down to Earth; Hannibal; See Spot Run; The Mexican.

UA Movies at Staten Island
141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) • 3000 Miles to Graceland; Cast Away; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Hannibal; Monkeybone; Recess: School's Out; Sweet November; The Mexican; Traffic; The Wedding Planner; You Can Count On Me.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8. • Beginning 3/7: "The New York Underground Film Festival." 3/7: *Hey, Happy!* (2000) 3/8: *Plaster Caster: A Cockumentary* (2000); *An Incredible Simulation* (2000). 3/9: *Ruins* (1999); *Satan was a Lady* (2001). 3/10: *The Navel* (2000); *Gang Tapes* (2000); *What About Me?* (2000). 3/11: *Down to the Crux* (2000); *The Curse* (2000); *Gone* (2000).

Museum of Modern Art
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); free with $10 admission, $6.50 for students and seniors, no admission fee for children 16 and under when accompanied by an adult. • "The Path of Resistance" 3/10: *Doctors, Liars and Women: AIDS activists Say No to Cosmo* (1988); *Healthcare: Your Money or Your Life* (1978); *Irish Dates* (1974); *Two Hotels in Our Troubled Middle East* (1988); *Dissonant Landscapes* (1986); *Ethnic Notions* (1986); *Anthem* (1991); *Tongues Untied* (1989). 3/11: *Sweet Sweetback's Baadassss Song* (1971); *Troublesome Creek: A Midwestern* (1996); *Harlan County U.S.A.* (1977); *Union Maids* (1976).

Opening

History Class

"It was fun to answer questions that the CIA hasn't for the past 40 years," says Douglas McGrath, pictured, with Denis Leary, who made his directorial debut with *Emma* and who co-wrote, co-directed, and stars in **Company Man**. "We based our film on the truth, then added complete play and silliness." But silly to McGrath is rocket science in Hollywood, and making a smart, PG-13-rated comedy was a bold, possibly self-destructive move given today's penchant for gross-out humor. "I know this sounds icky," he says, "like there'll be a dog in it, but *Company Man* is for the whole family." With an inspired supporting cast, including Sigourney Weaver, John Turturro, and Alan Cumming, the slapstick, almost *In-Laws*-esque story traces a grammar teacher's unlikely transformation into a befuddled CIA agent who must deal with defecting ballerinas, randy presidents, and acid trips with Fidel Castro. It also features a fantastic unbilled cameo that even the CIA couldn't miss—but that we promised we wouldn't reveal. Opens March 9.

Photograph courtesy of Paramount Classics.

Edited by Logan Hill

Wilkommen Back

Proving that tawdry trannies can still draw wealthy uptowners, wide-eyed tourists, and Village people to Studio 54, the Roundabout's smash hit revival of **Cabaret** rolls on. Earlier this month, the show surpassed the original 1966 production's run of 1,166 performances, and next week Gina Gershon, the terrific Matt McGrath (pictured), and all their old chums kick off the production's fourth year on Broadway. (See "Broadway.")

Broadway

Previews and Openings

A Class Act
The Manhattan Theatre Club's successful tribute to the life and music of that singular sensation, *A Chorus Line* lyricist Edward Kleban, transfers to Broadway. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/11 opening. • Ambassador Theatre, 219 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Design For Living
Alan Cumming and Dominic West seek the love of Jennifer Ehle in Noel Coward's 1932 ménage à trois comedy, directed by Joe Mantello. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Some early curtains. In previews for a 3/15 opening. • American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).

Follies
Before a wrecking ball transforms a once spectacular New York theater into a parking lot, ghosts and showgirls from decades past reunite for one last time in Sondheim's 1971 musical, directed by Matthew Warchus. Blythe Danner, Gregory Harrison, Judith Ivey, and Treat Williams star. $45–$90. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Previews begin 3/8 for a 4/5 opening. • Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Invention of Love
Tom Stoppard's play follows an elderly A. E. Housman as he travels back in time and confronts his younger self. Robert Sean Leonard and Richard Easton star. $30–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/29 opening. • Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Judgment at Nuremburg
Based on the second trials of the Nazi war criminals, Abby Mann's new drama is directed by John Tillinger (*Comic Potential, The Price, Night Must Fall*). Maximilian Schell and George Grizzard star. $29.50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/26 opening. • Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (212-239-6280).

Now Playing

Aida
The epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. Taylor Dayne joins the cast 2/27. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).

Annie Get Your Gun
Reba McEntire plays Annie Oakley, the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover in Buffalo Bill's traveling Wild West Show. Irving Berlin did the lyrics and score; Peter Stone updated the book. $85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. • Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).

Beauty and the Beast
Disney's beast is back (no, not the mouse). Sarah Litzinger blanches and blushes as the fair maiden; Steve Blanchard roars and repents as the Beast. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).

Cabaret
The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for recreating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. (Simon: 3/30/98.) $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 3/19/98. • Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Chicago
It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) Bebe Neuwirth stars, opposite Belle Calaway through 3/1. $20–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 11/14/96. • Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Contact
This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Backed up by a terrific ensemble, Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

The Dinner Party
Neil Simon's unabashedly contrived new comedy features three men, two of their ex-wives, and a mysterious man who has locked them all in a Paris dining room together. Henry Winkler and John Ritter star. $45–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Dirty Blonde
Kathy Najimy takes over for actress-playwright Claudia Shear in this delightful play about two Gotham singles who meet at the grave of Mae West, sampling delicious vignettes from the life of the woman who said, "I'm no angel, but I've spread my wings a bit." $65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Fosse
A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago*. Ben Vereen and Ann Reinking star, through 4/1. $65–$80. Mon., Tues., and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Full Monty
The musical adaptation of the 1997 film about desperate, destitute men who have nothing to lose but their underwear. Music and lyrics by David Yazbek; book by Terrence McNally; directed by Jack O'Brien. $31–$86. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Jane Eyre
This musical, with contributions from John Carid, Scott Schwartz, John Napier, and Paul Gordon, received very mixed reviews at the La Jolla Playhouse—but broke box-office records. $50–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).

Kiss Me, Kate
With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Burke Moses and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the Shrew's Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. $26–$86. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Ground Rules

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0742.

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

Les Misérables
What a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$85. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 3/12/87. • Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Lion King
This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$90. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. • New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).

The Music Man
Back in 1957, Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* made a star out of Robert Preston; the current revival should do the same for Rebecca Luker. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $40–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).

The Phantom of the Opera
Unlike *Cats,* Andrew Lloyd Webber's other blockbuster refuses to give up the ghost. $20–$85. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. • Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Proof
David Auburn's *Proof* is what *Copenhagen* ought to be: a play about scientists whose science matters less than their humanity. As directed by Daniel Sullivan, the performances are perfect. As for Mary-Louise Parker, her Catherine is a performance of genius. (Simon: 6/5/00.) $24–$69. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

Rent
The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).

Riverdance
The Irish return. $25–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).

The Rocky Horror Show
Christopher Ashley (*Jeffrey*) directs a surreal cast in Frank N. Furter's naughty pad. Lifelong rocker Joan Jett makes her Broadway debut opposite *Rent* star Daphne Rubin-Vega, stage vet Tom Hewitt, comics Dick Cavett and Lea De Laria, and Alice Ripley of *Side Show* (very appropriate). Enjoy the eye-popping design by David Rockwell (Cirque Du Soleil Theatres). $75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9:45, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Circle in the Square, 1633 Broadway (212-239-6200).

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe
Lily Tomlin returns, along with an astonishing assortment of characters led by Trudy, a homeless lady and "creative consultant to these aliens from outer space" who knows that reality is really just "a collective hunch." The solo show that makes other solo shows look like, well, solo shows, it's written and directed by Jane Wagner, Tomlin's longtime collaborator and partner. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Seussical
The struggling but optimistic musical gets a much-needed lift from Rosie O'Donnell. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife
Who would have expected from a campy downtown playwright a nicely structured, intelligently funny, satirically relevant uptown comedy? In Charles Busch's new play, the retired but still overactive allergist Dr. Ira Taub is married to Marjorie, an immobilized nervous wreck since the death of her therapist. If you seek an ideal cast, look no further. Linda Lavin, for whom the admiring Busch wrote Marjorie as, he says, a kind of King Lear, is that and more. (Simon: 3/13/00.) Also starring Tony Roberts and Michele Lee. $30–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Bat Boy: The Musical
Bold-faced headlines in the *Weekly World News* declaring the capture of a live bat-child led to the creation of this high-flying musical. $20–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun at 7:30. In previews for a 3/21 opening. • Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-4100).

I Will Bear Witness
This world premiere dramatizes the diaries of Victor Klemperer, a German Jew whose life was spared during Hitler's reign. $15–$25. Call for schedule. In previews for a 3/11 opening. • Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (212-677-4210).

If It Was Easy
A Broadway producer and a gossip columnist concoct a musical about Ol' Blue Eyes and get the mob on their side in this new comedy from Stewart F. Lane and Ward Morehouse III. $55–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/7 opening. • Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Lobby Hero
The winner of last year's Sundance Grand Jury Prize for *You Can Count on Me,* playwright Kenneth Lonergan (*Waverly Gallery, This Is Our Youth*) returns to the stage. Mark Brokaw (*This Is Our Youth, How I Learned to Drive*) directs a sticky story about a security guard, his supervisor, and two cops who are all trapped in a confounding moral situation. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 8. In previews for a 3/13 opening. • Playwrights Horizons' Anne G. Wilder Theater, 416 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).

Machinal
The 1928 play loosely based on the story of Helen Jones, the first woman to die by the electric chair. $10–$19. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/7 opening. • Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. (212-358-5182).

Newyorkers
A musical collage inspired by Gotham. $50. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/20 opening. • Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage II, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Ten Unknowns
In the latest offering from Jon Robin Baitz, Donald Sutherland plays a seventy-something painter whose hermitage in Mexico is disturbed by three visitors: Justin Kirk, Julianna Margulies, and Denis O'Hare. Daniel Sullivan (*Proof, Dinner With Friends*) directs. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8., Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/8 opening. • Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Now Playing

American Rhapsody
A new musical revue of Gershwin's works directed by Ruth Leon and starring KT Sullivan and Mark Nadler. $40–$55. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. • Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (212-239-6200).

Blue Man Group: Tubes
Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. • Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).

Bobbi Boland
It's been twenty years since she was named Miss Florida, but when a new girl comes into town, Bobbi has

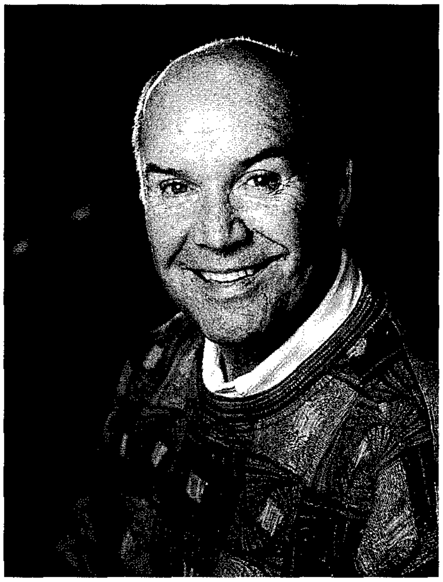
Previews

Eve of Destruction

Since folly loves the martyrdom of fame, the Roundabout Theatre must adore the multi-million-dollar advance ticket sales for its revival of James Goldman and Stephen Sondheim's 1971 cult hit **Follies**. Blythe Danner (pictured, top) and Judith Ivey (right) will star opposite Gregory Harrison and Treat Williams as world-weary Ziegfeld-era stars who reunite at their old theater just before its demolition. The score, one of the richest in the Sondheim canon, includes such cabaret perennials as "I'm Still Here," "Losing My Mind," and "Broadway Baby." Broadway babies should think about ordering now, if they want to get good tickets before Independence Day. Previews begin March 8. (See "Broadway.")

Fathers of *Invention*

"In the English theater, there's Shakespeare, Shaw, and Stoppard—they're men who are word-drunk," says Jack O'Brien (pictured), the artistic director of San Diego's Old Globe Theatre. "That's why, I think, directors tend to abstract them, to strip them down so they can just deal with the language," he says. "But that's not what you do to *The Tempest* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*." And that's not what O'Brien plans for the Broadway premiere of **The Invention of Love**, Stoppard's sprawling, spiraling drama about the life and passions of the poet and scholar A. E. Housman. "Sure, you can strip it down, or, you can just *go there*. This one needs Disney's help." To stage the complicated spectacle fully, O'Brien, a longtime friend and champion of Stoppard's, has reunited with a collaborator who helped make the 1994 production of Stoppard's *Hapgood* a sensation: the inventive design master Bob Crowley. The two are confronting one of Stoppard's densest works (and that's saying a lot) as a passion play. "We're considering this in dream terms," O'Brien explains. "So there's no real set, just aspects conjured out of a man's imagination." O'Brien says they've also tried to amplify the sexual undercurrents of the play, which largely tracks Housman's unrequited love for his Oxford classmate Moses John Jackson. "We wanted to give this play an incredible jolt of sensuality," says O'Brien, who, as the director of Broadway's *The Full Monty*, can claim a certain authority on the subject. "The university is such a sexy atmosphere," he says. "Kids are responding to nature and to each other, and to the fact that everyone we knew was beautiful at 20—even the *nerds* looked good." Even, O'Brien might have added, that *über*-nerd Housman, as played (at varying ages) by Richard Easton and Robert Sean Leonard. In previews. (See "Broadway.") L.H.



to defend her crown. $30–$40. Wed.–Mon. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 7. • Arclight Theatre, 152 West 71st St. (212-279-4200).

Boy Gets Girl
A strange tale of stalking in the city by controversial playwright Rebecca Gilman (*Spinning Into Butter*). $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. • MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Cartas: A Nun in Love
Based on *Les Lettres d'une Religieuse Portugaise* and translated and performed by Myriam Cyr, this show tells the true story of a nun in seventeenth-century Portugal who is seduced and abandoned by a French cavalry officer. $35–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 4. • 45 Bleecker Theater, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

Cary and Gallo: What If We Did This?
Ted Sullivan directs the comic duo Cary and Gallo, in a production written by several late-night-television writers. $30. Mon. at 8. Through 3/15. • SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

Cellini
Moonstruck screenwriter John Patrick Shanley wrote and directs this play about larger-than-life Florentine sculptor and ladies' man Benvenuto Cellini. $30–$50. Tues. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Wed. at 7, Sun. at 3. • Second Stage Theatre, 307 W. 43rd St. (212-246-4422).

Circus
A retired tight-rope walker and his grandson turn a nursing home into their own big top in this puppet/theater piece for tots. $10–$20. Call for complete schedule. • New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

De La Guarda
A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Perfect for theatrical thrill-seekers who don't mind breaking a sweat. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. • Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).

The Devil's Music: The Life and Blues of Bessie Smith
The legendary singer gets the biographical treatment in this new musical. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Theatre 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).

Dinner With Friends
Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) Winner of the Pulitzer Prize. $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. • Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).

Dogeaters
In Jessica Hagedorn's new adaptation of her prize-winning novel, politicians, hustlers, and beauty queens all mingle in eighties Philippines. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. • Joseph Papp Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

The Donkey Show
A fantastic, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with even looser morals. Very fun. $39. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).

Downhearted Blues—The Life and Music of Bessie Smith
Tony- and Grammy-winning Jennifer Holliday wrote and stars in this musical one-act chronicling the life of Bessie Smith for the Illyria Theatre. $30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. • Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-561-9553).

End of the World Party
A new comedy about gay men who share a Fire Island summer house by multiple Emmy winner Chuck Ranberg. $45–$49.50. Mon.–Wed. and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. • 47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Excuse Me, I'm Talking!
The Jewish Rep presents Judy Chaikin's autobiographical one-woman show. $40–$45. Tues.–Thurs. and Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. • Duke Theater, 229 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

The Fantasticks
The musical perennial. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. • Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).

Forbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey
Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. $49.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. • Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).

Force Continuum
New production of the Atlantic Theater Company about three generations of black officers of the NYPD. Written by Kia Corthron and directed by Michael John Garcês. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Atlantic Theater Company, 336 W. 20th St. (212-239-6200).

Fresa y Chocolate (Strawberry and Chocolate)
A comedy about the confrontation between a gay artist and a revolutionary purist. $30–$40. Call for schedule. • Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

Fully Committed
For the price of an entrée, Becky Mode serves up all the splendors and miseries of restaurant life prepared to a fare-thee-well. (Simon: 1/17/00.) Now starring Christopher Fitzgerald (*Saturday Night*). $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).

High Dive
A frantic new comedy written and performed by Leslie Ayvazian (*Nine Armenians, Plan Day*). $20. Thurs.–Sat. and Mon. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/25. • MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-727-7765).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change
They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 8/1/96. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

The Idiot
An adaptation of Dostoyevsky's classic kicks off this new theater's first season. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. (212-239-6200).

The Importance of Being Oscar
Niall Buggy (*The Weir*) stars in this new Irish Repertory Theatre production of Micheál MacLiammóir's portrait of Oscar Wilde. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).

Isn't It Romantic
Worth Street Theater stages Wendy Wasserstein's 1983 comedy, directed by Jeff Cohen. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8,

Photograph by Ken Howard.

Sun. at 3. Through 3/25. • Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. (212-206-1515).

Late Nite Catechism

Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $40. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Leaving Queens

Kate Moira Ryan's new musical drama. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • Women's Project Theatre, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200).

Let A Hundred Flowers Bloom

David Zellnik's new comedy about four friends dealing with love, sex, and side effects in a post-pharmaceutical New York. $15. Tues.–Sat. at 8. • Center Stage, 48 W. 21st St.

Opening

First and *Ten*

In **Ten Unknowns**, the latest from Jon Robin Baitz, Donald Sutherland plays a grumpy elderly painter whose New Mexico hermitage is disturbed by three young visitors: Julianna Margulies, Justin Kirk (pictured, with Sutherland), and Denis O'Hare. Director Daniel Sullivan, who recently scored with *Proof* and the Pulitzer-winning *Dinner With Friends*, goes for a critical Triple Crown when the production opens at the Mitzi E. Newhouse on March 8. (See "Off Broadway.")

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

The London Cuckolds

Women are on top in Edward Ravenscroft's comedy. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7. • Blue Heron Arts Center, 123 E. 24th St. (212-290-1595).

Maybe, Baby It's You

Playwright-performers Shari Simpson and Charlie Shanian play eleven couples in this romantic comedy. $40. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. at 10. • Theater at St. Luke's, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Momma

Siobhan Fallon (*Saturday Night Live*) wrote and stars in this one-woman comedy about a rural upstate schoolbus driver whose desperate wish to have a baby leads her to New York City. $25. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Mon. at 7. Reopens 3/8. Through 3/24. • Atlantic Theater Company, 336 W. 20th St. (212-239-6200).

Naked Boys Singing

Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. • Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).

Now That Communism Is Dead, My Life Feels Empty

Richard Foreman (*Bad Boy Nietzsche*) directs Tony Torn and Jay Smith as two ex-radical hipsters who just don't belong in a post-Marxist world. $15. Tues. and Fri.–Sun. at 8. • Ontological Theatre at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (212-533-4650).

Our Sinatra

Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes, now transferred from a successful run at the Algonquin Hotel. $50–$100. Mon.–Wed., Fri. and Sun. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. • Reprise Room at Dylan's, 245 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

P.S. 69

Gay substitute teacher by day, exotic dancer by night. Susan Jeremy stars in this comedy about her experiences in a New York public school. $25. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. Reopens 3/8. • Theatre-Studio, Inc., 750 Eighth Ave. (212-279-4200).

Paradise Island

Lynn Cohen and Adrienne Shelly star as a mother and daughter on a 24-hour Caribbean gambling getaway in Benjie Aerenson's drama. $25–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • New Group/Theatre @ St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).

Perfect Crime

The long-running thriller. $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 4/5/87. • Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (212-695-3401).

Pete 'n' Keely

If you can approach this pocket musical with an open mindlessness, you can have a rattling good time. A 1968 TV studio presents a live telecast meant to reconcile and reinstate an estranged husband-and-wife team on the order of Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme. George Dvorsky and Sally Mayes sing, dance, and spar to comic perfection. (Simon: 1/8/01.) Costumes by Bob Mackie. $35–$55. Tues–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

The Play About the Baby

Tony winner Marian Seldes (*A Delicate Balance*) and Brian Murray star in Edward Albee's first new play since *Three Tall Women*, a mysterious drama about a couple of young new parents whose lives are invaded by an older, less innocent pair. $25–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7. • Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15th St. (212-239-6200).

Race

Austrian playwright Ferdinand Bruckner's 1933 drama tracks the impact of the Nazi uprising on a group of German medical students. $25–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Sat. and Sun. at 2. Through 3/11. • Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (212-677-4210).

Rashomon

Pan Asian Rep presents a new adaptation of the Ryunosuke Akutagawa story that was made into a classic film by Akira Kurosawa. $30–$45. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30. • West End Theatre, 263 W. 86th St. (212-279-4200).

Resident Alien

American premiere of Tim Fountain's "fully authorized dramatization" of the late Quentin Crisp's life and work, directed by Mike Bradwell and starring Bette Bourne as the "Naked Civil Servant" himself. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 2 and 7. • New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-460-5475).

Saved

Originally banned after its London premiere in 1965, Edward Bond's play about life in a working-class London suburb returns to New York. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Sitting Pretty

A helpless, jobless middle-aged woman finds solace as a nude model in the American premiere of a drama by young British playwright Amy Rosenthal. $15–$19. Wed. and Thurs at 7, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/11. • Hypothetical Theatre Company, 344 E. 14th St. Y. (212-206-1515).

A Skull in Connemara

The Roundabout Theatre Company presents the second episode of the Leenane trilogy by the talented playwright Martin McDonagh (*The Beauty Queen of Leenane*). $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. • Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-307-4100).

Stomp

As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $29.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. • Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).

Strictly Personal

A comedy about dating and personals by Jake Feinberg. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

The Subject Was Roses

The revival of Frank D. Gilroy's Pulitzer Prize–winning drama stars Jean Cocteau Rep regulars Craig Smith and Elise Stone. $15–$40. Call for schedule. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Suburb

In this musical comedy, a young couple contemplates abandoning the city's hustle and bustle. $45–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. • St. Peter's Church, Citigroup Center, 619 Lexington Ave., at 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Summer Cyclone

Nela Wagman's new drama. $15. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. • Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. (212-247-4982).

The Syringa Tree

Pamela Gien plays 28 characters in a solo show about a young girl who tries to come to terms with life in sixties South Africa. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).

Te Juro, Juana Que Tango Ganas (I Swear to You Jane, I Have an Itch for You)

Comedy of manners "in the style of Molière" by Emilio Carbadallido. $30–$40. Call for schedule. • Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

Theater of Light

The return of "light artist" Rudi Stern's "visual fantasia," which features thousands of hand-painted images combined with light and music. $20. Wed. and Sun. at 8, Thurs.–Sat. at 8 and 10. • Flamboyan Theatre, 107 Suffolk St. (212-279-4200).

Time and Again

New musical version of Jack Finney's time-travel romance from the Manhattan Theatre Club. $40. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • MTC's Stage II at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding

A wedding and reception, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and, with more than 4,000 performances, it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $67.50–$80. Thurs.–Sun. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. and Vinnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Urban Zulu Mambo

A collection of short works by Kia Corthron, Suzan-Lori Parks, Ntozake Shange, and Regina Taylor exploring issues like homelessness and love, as performed by author-actress Taylor. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

The Vagina Monologues
Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Vieques
Set on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, a new drama by Jorge González. Call for schedule. • Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

Off-Off Broadway

The Abduction Project
Collision Theory's new play delves into alien encounters in fifties suburbia. $12–$15. Mon. and Wed.–Sun. at 8:30. • Here, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202).

An Evening With Niall Toibín
Irish funnyman presents his one-man show. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Opens 3/7. Through 3/24. • Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. (212-581-4125).

Breaker: An Aerial Fairie Tale
Chelsea Bacon's newest aerial theater-dance piece . $8–$15. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. 3/9–3/24. • Dixon Place, 309 E. 26th St. (212-532-1546).

Cannibal! The Musical
Half-eaten corpses and musical comedy from *South Park*'s Trey Parker. $12–$15. Sat. at 10:30. • The Kraine, 85 East 4th St. (212-539-7686).

Despair's Book of Dreams and the Sometimes Radio
New musical-theater piece from the Austin, Texas, Vortex Theater. $15. Fri.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. at 10:30, Sun. at 3. • Here, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202).

Dirty Stuff
Jonny McGovern's solo show. $10. Sun. at 10. • Fez Under the Time Café, 380 Lafayette St. (212-462-9077).

Evelina's Heart
Multimedia play inspired by the life of Puerto Rican activist Dr. Evelina López. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 4. Through 3/18. • Nuyorican Poets Café, 236 E. 3rd St. (212-255-3733).

The Florida Project
Alligator wrestlers meet mermaids in this new play, featuring Richard Maxwell. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. Opens 3/1. Through 3/18. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).

Kariuki's Notebook
When a Kenyan school is shut down, an American Peace Corps teacher vows to stay, in this play about the power of language and how it can transcend cultural boundaries. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/11. • La Mama E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Mercurius
Playwright and director John Jahnke (*Lola Montez in Bavaria*) returns with a tale of sisters, a deserted island, and a hermaphroditic spirit. $15. Fri.–Sun. at 7. Through 3/18. • HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (212-647-0202).

Mono
Steven Tannenbaum directs an inventive improvisatory play set in a bar-like environment. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. • Surf Reality, 172 Allen St. (212-358-3447).

Night and Day
In Tom Stoppard's comedy, journalists, an English colonialist, and a dictator clash in Africa. $20–$40. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3, some Weds. at 8. Through 3/22. • Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Rosmersholm
The seventh installment of the Century Center's Ibsen series. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 3. • Century Center Ballroom Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. (212-982-6782).

Stars
A new play about teenage sexual brutality featuring Shannon Burkett. $10. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30. Opens 3/7. Through 3/10. • Soho Rep, 46 Walker St. (212-479-7979).

Edited by Edith Newhall

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Nick Blosser
Paintings of imaginary landscapes in egg tempera on wood; through 4/13. • Baumgold, 74 E. 79th St. (212-861-7338).

Quita Brodhead
Portraits, nudes, landscapes, and abstractions by the American Modernist painter (1901–) who studied with Arthur B. Carles and whose retrospective will open at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in late June; through 3/31. • Taggart, 48 E. 73rd St. (212-628-4000).

Alexander Creswell
Recent watercolors of the New York Public Library, the Bethesda Fountain, the Brooklyn Bridge, and other New York landmarks; through 4/14. • Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (212-535-8810).

Robert Cronin
Color-field paintings dating from 1965 to 1966, when the artist was teaching at Bennington College; through 4/7. • Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave. (212-924-0858).

James Havard
New encaustic paintings; through 4/21. • Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (212-987-1655).

David Klamen
New paintings and works on paper; through 3/31. • Gray, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-472-8787).

Tom Leaver
Landscape paintings that border on abstraction; through 3/24. • Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (212-535-5767).

Wendy Mark
Monotypes of landscapes; through 3/24. • Bookstein Fine Art, 50 E. 78th St. (212-439-9605).

Matthias Muller
The first New York presentation of the German filmmaker/artist's work *Vacancy,* a film tracing the rise and fall of Brasília, a city that was intended to become a Utopia; through 3/16. • Holm, 17 E. 71st St. (212-734-8270).

Bruce Nauman
Sculptures in bronze, wax, and neon, and related drawings and video works; through 3/31. • Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. (212-517-8677).

Paul Resika/Katherine Porter
New landscape paintings/Recent abstract paintings. Through 3/31. • Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (212-879-6606).

Sean Scully
Recent paintings and photographs on the theme of light and gravity; through 4/28. • Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550).

Andy Warhol
Paintings from the artist's 1981 "Guns" series; through 3/31. • Van De Weghe, 42 E. 76th St. (212-517-0031).

Petra Winterkamp
Paintings that explore the material appearance of language through symbolic forms of script and sign; through 4/7. • Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St. (212-288-5888).

57th Street Area

Christian Boltanski/Jeff Wall
An installation that uses light, shadows, clothing, and blurred second- or third-generation prints made from found or borrowed family photographs/Backlit lightbox works that depict mysterious staged tableaux within seemingly mundane surroundings. Through 3/17. • Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

Flavio Garciandia
New paintings by the Cuban artist that use elements of Cubism, Surrealism, and Abstract Expressionism and suggest a kind of "tropical kitsch"; through 3/24. • Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-9090).

Julie Heffernan
New paintings that depict an accumulation of symbols around a central figure; through 3/31. • At Littlejohn, 41 E. 57th St. (212-980-2323) and P•P•O•W, 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642).

Barbara Hepworth
Fifteen marble sculptures by the British artist (1903–1975), made shortly after the United Nations installed her monumental public sculpture *Single Form* (1963) in front of the U.N. Secretariat Building in New York City; through 3/17. • PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (212-421-3292).

Donald Judd
A survey of the sculptor's prints; through 3/31. • Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. (212-489-3331).

Robert Kalka
Landscape dioramas that depict images related to the artist's native Pittsburgh ; through 3/31. • Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (212-245-2888).

Robert Kipniss
New paintings and drawings of still life and landscapes; through 3/24. • Beadleston, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-581-7544).

Oskar Kokoschka
A memorial exhibition of the Austrian artist's paintings, watercolors, and drawings, from public and private collections; through 3/17. • Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (212-541-4900).

Robert Kushner
Vividly colored paintings of flowers; through 3/31. • DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-247-2111).

Amy Myers
Large-scale drawings using graphite, ink, and gouache that lyrically express the laws and postulates of physics; through 3/24. • Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-752-2929).

Jackson Pollock/David Smith
Paintings and sculptures from the 1930s and 1940s by the American artists; through 3/24. • Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-6780).

Paul Rickert/Emma Tapley
Recent paintings and watercolors of Maine/Paintings of landscapes reflected in water. Through 3/31. • Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (212-759-2345).

Anne Truitt
Paintings and works on paper by an American artist widely known for her sculpture; through 3/17. • Danese, 41 E. 57th St. (212-223-2227).

Tom Uttech
Landscape paintings that depict views of northern Canadian woods; through 3/24. • Schmidt/Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-1122).

James Valerio
Twelve pencil drawings made between 1996 and 2001, including self-portraits, landscapes, and figure studies; through 3/31. • Adams, 41 W. 57th St. (212-644-5665).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Howard Buchwald
New abstract paintings whose rhythmic lines and squiggles suggest musical compositions; through 4/3. • Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (212-966-6676).

Ground Rules

Galleries are generally open Tuesday through Saturday, from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Rudolph De Crignis
Paintings whose layers of color evoke changes of light during the day; through 3/31. • Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

Susanna Heller
Recent paintings that use the wave formations left by tugboats as they leave New York harbor as a point of departure; through 3/31. • Ross, 568 Broadway (212-343-2161).

Edda Jachens/Ted Kinkaid
Paintings of geometric shapes on wooden boards/Images of ovals, grids, and stripes that are produced on a computer, photographed, and then printed as gravures. Through 3/24. • Bridgewater/Lustberg & Blumenfeld, 560 Broadway (212-941-6355).

Robert Jack
Works on paper; through 3/31. • 123 Watts, 123 Watts St. (212-219-1482).

David Kapp
Recent paintings of New York City street scenes that evoke the urgency and chaos of urban life; through 3/24. • Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (212-463-8634).

Walter Martin and Paloma Munoz
A Gathering, an MTA project that consists of 181 bronze birds perched over turnstiles, on I beams, and in grille work cages; through 3/31. • P•P•O•W, 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642).

Paul McCarthy/Martin Kersels
The Garden, a 1992 work by the Los Angeles artist that fuses performance and sculpture/A sculpture and an accompanying video. Through 3/24. • Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (212-343-7300).

Andy Warhol
Paintings and drawings of kitchen knives from the artist's "Knives" series of 1981–82; through 4/14. • Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St. (212-431-3685).

Terry Winters
Sixty new paintings from the series "Set Diagram"; through 4/28. • Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Chelsea

Brian Alfred
New large-scale paintings that focus on the interaction between the natural and the man-made; through 3/24. • Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6999).

Alighiero e Boetti
An exhibition of works by the Italian conceptual artist organized in conjunction with the Archivio Boetti in Rome, including his "Camouflage" canvases from the sixties, maps dating from 1971 to 1992, kilim works from the nineties, and two self-portrait sculptures; through 3/31. • Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St. (212-741-1111).

Chakaia Booker
New sculptures constructed from discarded car and bicyle tires; through 3/24. • Marlborough Chelsea, 211 W. 19th St. (212-463-8634).

Victor Burgin
A video work titled *Nietzsche's Paris* that draws on the correspondence between Friedrich Nietzsche, Lou Salomé, and Paul Reé during eight months in 1882 when they formed an intellectual ménage à trois; through 3/24. • Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. (212-462-2668).

Sophie Calle
Double Game, a game inspired by a fictive character (in the novel *Leviathan*, by Paul Auster) based on the artist; through 3/24. • Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Eugenio Dittborn
New airmail paintings by the Chilean artist, each comprising between two to six panels; through 4/14. • Alexander/Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (212-367-7474).

Jimmy Ernst
Paintings and works on paper made between 1942 and 1983; through 3/31. • ACA, 529 W. 20th St. (212-206-8080).

Rainer Ganahl
Photographs and video tapes that presents a multiplicity of materials on Karl Marx, focusing on Marx as a man of ideological and political contradictions; through 3/22. • Baumgartner, 418 W. 15th St. (212-633-2276).

Sigrid Hackenberg
A video and sound installation by the Spanish-German artist that depicts four life-size video images of Rosa Luxemburg as portrayed by the artist; through 3/17. • Boesky, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-680-9889).

Theresa Hackett
Recent paintings that depict abstractions of ocean waves and hybrid landscapes; through 3/31. • Lynch, 147 W. 29th St. (212-967-7584).

Robert F. Hammerstiel
Images that juxtapose dog owners with leashes, as well as dogs and syringes used to implant microchips; through 3/31. • Cristinerose, 529 W. 20th St. (212-206-0297).

Gary Hume
New paintings; through 4/21. • Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. (212-243-0200).

Bill Jensen
New abstract paintings; through 3/24. • Boone, 541 W. 24th St. (212-752-2929).

Ray Johnson
Collages, mail art, texts, and drawings from the artist's estate that have never been previously exhibited; through 4/21. • Feigen Contemporary, 535 W. 20th St. (212-929-0500).

John Klima
"Go Fish," interactive media installations that explore the realm of computer games and their real-life consequences; through 3/24. • Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (212-727-3323).

Ellen Kozak
New paintings inspired by the Hudson River; through 3/24. • Art Resources Transfer, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-5956).

Kathleen Kucka
Abstract paintings on aluminum panels; through 3/24. • Coploff, 508-526 W. 26th St. (212-741-1149).

Tadaaki Kuwayama
New anodized aluminum panels by this Japanese artist who first exhibited his work in New York at the Green Gallery in 1960; through 3/28. • Folin/Riva, 529 W. 20th St. (212-242-3434).

Lilla LoCurto/Bill Outcault
Photographs exploring the topography of the body through digital mapping; through 3/24. • Taylor, 535 W. 22nd St. (646-230-0992).

Paul McCarthy
Two recent sculptures and the installation "Santa Chocolate Shop," a videotape and a plywood set that was first exhibited in the 1997 Whitney Biennial; through 4/7. • Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. (212-206-9100).

John Monteith
Photo-based works constructed from manipulated yearbook pictures; through 3/31. • Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. (212-627-4819).

James Nares
New paintings that continue the artist's use of the individual brushstroke to explore the relationship between movement, gesture, and surface in painting; through 3/17. • Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. (212-563-4474).

Dennis Oppenheim
Upper Cut, a multiple that transforms the art world's denizens into book titles; through 3/31. • Dorfman Projects, 529 W. 20th St. (212-352-2272).

Jane Philbrick
A sound installation comprised of various narrative tropes including fairy tales and dinner conversation/Sculptures, works on paper, and multiples that play with the image of the family tree. Through 3/31. • Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (212-741-3318).

Sarah Rapson
New paintings, drawings, and a film by the British artist; through 4/7. • Cohan Leslie and Browne, 138 Tenth Ave. (212-206-8710).

Milton Resnick/Lena Liv
New paintings from the series "X Space"/Constructions that begin with the recovery of a found photograph that the artist manipulates and then combines with handmade paper, sand, and wrought and cast iron. Through 3/17. • Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

Sandra Scolnik
Painted self-portraits; through 3/24. • CRG, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-966-4360).

Beverly Semmes
New fabric sculpture and photographs; through 4/14. • Tonkonow, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-255-8450).

Jim Shaw
Recent paintings, sculpture, and drawings inspired by the artist's dreams; through 4/21. • Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (212-206-7100).

Hiroshi Sugito
New paintings of delicately rendered dreamlike scenes of animals, figures, and architecture; through 3/24. • Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-3335).

Rosemarie Trockel
New drawings and videos by the German artist; through 3/31. • Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (212-206-9300).

Peter Waite
Recent paintings; through 3/31. • Thorp, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-6565).

Charlie White /Michael Raedecker
Photographs that explore the insecurity and self-consciousness of the "everyman" and his desire to connect emotionally and physically with others/Sewn paintings. Through 4/7. • Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (212-627-6000).

Terry Winters
New drawings that explore complex bodies of order, chaos, gravity, and speed through the abstract use of color, line, and volume; through 4/28. • Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

C & M Arts
"About Faces," portraits by Cornell, Close, Currin, Picasso, Maar, Warhol, others; through 3/10. • 45 E. 78th St. (212-861-0020).

57th Street Area

Cohan
"The Big ID," works that explore the unconscious through personal iconography, by Eyre, Hancock, Loy, Sugito, others; through 3/24. • 41 W. 57th St. (212-755-7171).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Art in General
"Lessons of Solitude," the first retrospective and U.S. exhibition of the drawings and sculptures of the Cuban artist and art critic Antonio Eligio Fernández, known as Tonel; through 3/31. • 79 Walker St. (212-219-0473).

Gibson
Celebration of the gallery's fortieth anniversary with works by Acconci, Beuys, Christo, Hutchinson, Oppenheim, others; through 4/7. • 568 Broadway (212-925-1192).

Other

CUNY Graduate Center
"Elective Affinities: Prints by Manet and Goya." An exhibition examining the role played by printmaking in the oeuvres of Goya and Manet, featuring etching and lithographs from the collections of the Arthur Ross Foundation and the New York Public Library; through 4/17. • 365 Fifth Ave. (212-817-7170).

Photography

Jonathan Anderson and Edwin Low
Collaborative photographs of world-class sportsmen and sportswomen; through 4/1. • Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (212-242-8811).

William Christenberry
Recent sculpture, photographs, and drawings; through 3/31. • Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

Thomas Demand
New works on political themes, including photographs of life-size environments constructed by the artist from cardboard, and a film consisting of 24 still images shown in a continual loop; through 4/7. • 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-255-1121).

William Eggleston
Photographs taken since 1992 that interpret the landscape as an alienating and eccentric environment; through 4/14. • Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (212-242-7727).

ICP
"Andy Warhol: Photography." The first major exhibition of the artist's photographs, including complementary paintings; through 3/18. • "Perfecting Mankind: Eugenics and Photography." An exhibit exploring the way in which photography was employed by the proponents of eugenics, a movement formed in the late nineteenth century that aimed to "breed better people"; through 3/18. • 1133 Sixth Ave. (212-860-1777), Tues.-Thurs. 10-5, Fri. 10-8 (5-8 voluntary contribution), Sat. and Sun. 10-6; $8, $6 students and seniors.

ICP Uptown
"Carrie Mae Weems: The Hampton Project." An installation that employs the turn-of-the-century photographs taken by Frances Benjamin Johnston (1864–1952) at Hampton Institute, images intended to document the success of the institute for the "Exhibit of American Negroes" at the Universal Exposition of 1900 in Paris; through 4/1. • 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (212-860-1777), Tues.- Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors.

Kenneth Josephson
Vintage prints from the sixties and seventies by this photographer whose work is currently on view in a retrospective at the Whitney Museum of Art; through 3/31. Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. (646-230-9610). •

Jean Kallina
Silver gelatin prints that depict views of interiors in European palaces; through 3/31. • Winston Wächter, 39 E. 78th St. (212-327-2526).

John Kalymnios
Freestanding sculpture, kinetic sculpture, and photographs; through 3/31. • Golden, 526 W. 26th St. (212-727-8304).

Ray K. Metzker
Black-and-white photographs of landscapes in Italy, France, Turkey, and various locations in the United States; through 3/31. • Miller, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-3930).

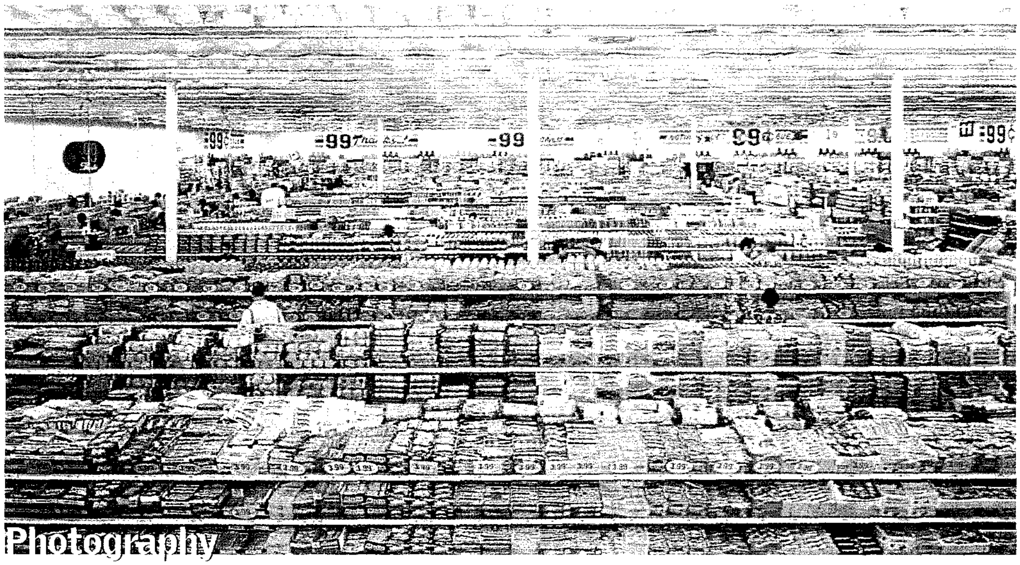
Ray Mortenson
Gelatin-silver photographs of weeds that explore issues of order and randomness and harmony and cacophony; through 4/7. • Borden, 560 Broadway (212-431-0166).

Rika Noguchi
Photographs by the Japanese photographer depicting cityscapes and construction zones from New York and Brazil, and images of islands being built by the Dutch government during the artist's stay in Amsterdam; through 3/24. • D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-352-9460).

PaineWebber
"A Maritime Album." Rare photographs documenting America's fishing, sailing, and whaling traditions, as well as naval encounters, shipbuilding ventures, and daily maritime life, selected by John Szarkowski from the archives of the Mariner's Museum, in Newport News, Virginia; through 4/1. • 1285 Ave. of the Americas (212-713-2885), Mon.-Fri. 8–6.

Hiroshi Sugimoto
Portraits of wax figures set against black backdrops; through 3/24. • Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. (212-627-1018).

Wols
Still lifes, portraits, abstractions, and fashion work from the thirties by the German artist (1913–1951) who worked in Paris and was part of the *Informel* movement; through 4/21. • Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (212-794-4444).



Photography

The Big Picture

To Americans, who got to know the husband-and-wife team of Bernd and Hilla Becher in the seventies, the couple's stark black-and-white photographs of German industrial architecture offered photography's most obvious contribution to minimalism. Three decades later, the Bechers are just as famous for something else: informing the work of such contemporary German photographers as Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer, Thomas Ruff, and Thomas Struth, all of whom studied under Bernd at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf and with both Bechers at their home. How one of their former students reinterpreted their basic method can be seen in **Andreas Gursky** at the Museum of Modern Art (11 West 53rd Street; through May 15). Organized by Peter Galassi, MOMA's chief photography curator, the show begins with Gursky's work from 1984, when the photographer, who had earlier employed the Bechers' "typological" approach—assembling a group of pictures into a grid that revealed the individual features within similar functional forms—began shooting sweeping landscapes that revealed the patterns of tiny figures swimming and hiking. By the late eighties, the human figure became increasingly incidental in Gursky's pictures of vast architectural structures (hotel lobbies, stock exchanges) and images of or referring to art (by Gerhard Richter, Jackson Pollock, Donald Judd, and others) or consumerism and global branding (above, *99 Cent.*, 1999). But just as you think Gursky has traveled as far from the Bechers as possible—his color and breathtaking scale (the prints are sometimes sixteen feet wide), for instance, can make his work seem as slick as the images they depict—you see that's not the case at all. He's simply put contemporary culture on a grid.

E.N.

hotograph courtesy of Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, and Monika Sprüth Galerie, Cologne.

Museums

American Craft Museum
"Made in Oakland: The Furniture of Garry Knox Bennett." The first retrospective of one of America's best-known furniture-makers; through 4/29. • "Confrontational Clay: The Artist as Social Critic." Works by 28 contemporary ceramicists whose work addresses social, political, and cultural issues; through 3/16. • 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. 10-6, Thurs. 10-8 (pay what you wish 6-8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

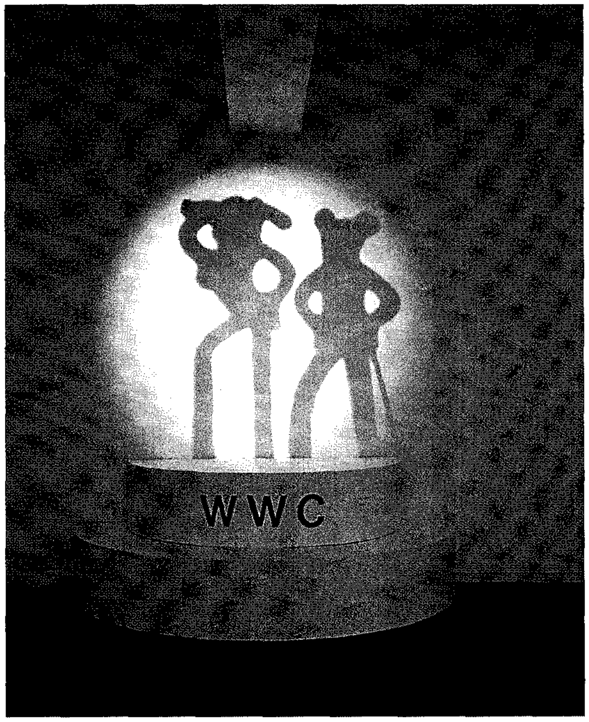
American Museum of Natural History
"The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter." More than 300 butterflies from Central, South, and North America housed in a walk-in vivarium; through 5/28. • "Full Moon: Apollo Mission Photographs of the Lunar Landscape." Rarely seen photographic prints from NASA's Apollo missions to the moon; through 3/28. • Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.-Thurs. 10-5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10-8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society at Midtown
"Can We Feed Ourselves? A Focus on Asia: Photographs by Hiroji Kubota." Photographs taken in Nepal, Cambodia, Burma, and other Asian countries that focus on food production, the population explosion, and environmental destruction; through 4/1. • 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-288-6400), Tues.-Sat. 10-6; Sun. noon-5. $4, $2 students and seniors (free Tues.-Fri. noon-2).

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts
"Women Designers in the U.S.A., 1900–2000";

The Magnificent Seven

It's as good a gauge to currents in contemporary Japanese art as you're likely to get. **The First Steps: Emerging Artists From Japan** introduces New Yorkers to artists (six individuals and a team) who entered a biennial competition in Japan and went through not one but two rigorous judgings before beating out the rest. (The field opened with 1,072 entries and then was narrowed to 100 finalists by a panel of international judges.) The resulting sculpture, paintings, video installations (right, Hiroko Shimizu's *Tricky,* 1998), and mixed-media installations are smart, beautifully made, and non-troublemaking. At Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 100 Washington Square East; through April 14.



through 4/8. • 18 W. 86th St. (212-501-3000), Tues.-Sun. 11-5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 students and seniors.

Brooklyn Museum of Art

"A Family Album: Brooklyn Collects." More than 200 major artworks, ranging from antiquities to contemporary paintings, lent by collectors who have deep connections to Brooklyn; through 7/1. • "Committed to the Image: Contemporary Black Photographers." Works by 94 photographers, among them Albert Chong, Gordon Parks, Jeffrey Henson Scales, Carrie Mae Weems, and Ernest Withers; through 4/29. • 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000), Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Sat. of every month), Sun. 11-6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution

"The Opulent Eye of Alexander Girard." A retrospective of works by the mid-century American designer and architect (1907–1993); through 3/18. • 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5, Tues. 10-9 (5-9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dahesh Museum of Art

"Gérôme & Goupil: Art and Enterprise." An exhibition exploring the mutually advantageous partnership between the nineteenth-century painter Jean-Léon Gérôme and his art dealer/publisher Adolphe Goupil; through 5/5. • 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (212-759-0606), Tues.-Sat. 11-6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts

"Diana Thater: *Knots and Surfaces.*" A large-scale multiprojection video installation that interacts with the architecture of Dia's third-floor gallery; through 1/30/02. • "Panamarenko: *Orbit.*" An exhibition pairing the Belgian artist's key work, *Aeromodeller*, an experimental flying machine built in 1969–71, with a work created this year; through 6/17. • "Bridget Riley: *Reconnaissance.*" The British artist's seminal paintings from the sixties and seventies in which carefully calibrated geometric patterns seem to move rhythmically across a canvas; through 6/17. • "Jorge Pardo: *Project.*" A transformation of the Dia Center's 6,000-square-foot ground floor featuring colored ceramic tiles, mural paintings, glass dividers, stylish seating, increased natural light, and an expanded bookstore; through 6/17. • "Rodney Graham and Bruce Nauman: . . . *the nearest faraway place* . . ." New and earlier works by both artists that reflect their shared interests in the myth of the American West; through 6/17. • 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center

"Metamorphoses and Transformation: The Drawings of Rosemarie Trockel." The first New York museum exhibition of the German artist's drawings, organized by the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris; through 4/7. • 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 11-6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection

"Mantegna's *Descent Into Limbo*, From the Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection." A smaller version of Mantegna's original masterpiece that was probably painted by the artist for Ferdinand Carlo, the last Duke of Mantua, around 1470–75; through 8/1. • "Six Paintings From the Former Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney on Loan From the Greentree Foundation." Works by Corot, Degas, Manet, Picasso, Redon; through 7/29. • 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery

"The First Steps: Emerging Artists From Japan"; through 4/14. • 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Wed. 11-8, Sat. 11-5; $2.50 *suggested donation.*

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

"Hugo Boss Prize 2000: Marjetica Potrc." An installation exploring the urban condition as it manifest itself worldwide by this Slovenian artist who was awarded the Hugo Boss Prize in November 2000; through 4/29. • "The Global Guggenheim: Selections From the Extended Collection." Approximately 175 works from the museum's collection, including paintings, sculpture, and works on paper spanning Impressionism through Pop Art; through 4/22. • "Project for a New Guggenheim Museum in New York City." Architect Frank Gehry's preliminary plans and models for a new Guggenheim developed in connection with the museum's response to a Request for Proposals issued by the New York City Economic Development Corporation for the development of Piers 9, 13, and 14 on the East River in lower Manhattan; through 4/21. • 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500), Sun.-Wed. 9-6, Fri. and Sat. 9-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $8 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum

"Charlotte Salomon: Life? Or Theatre?" The first New York exhibit of gouaches by this artist (1917–1943) who drew on her own experience, and that of her family, in Nazi Germany; through 3/25. • 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200), Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11-5:45, Tues. 11-8 (Tues. after 5, pay what you wish); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

"Vermeer and the Delft School." Paintings by Johannes Vermeer, Pieter de Hooch, and other artists of the Delft School; 3/8–5/27. • "The Treasury of Basel Cathedral." Ecclesiastical and secular objects from the Historisches Museum Basel and other European museums dating from the eleventh through the early sixteenth centuries that were originally part of the medieval treasury of the Basel Minister; through 5/27. • "William Trost Richards in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Drawings and paintings by the Philadelphia-born artist (1833–1905), depicting landscapes and marine subjects in Pennsylvania, New England, and the British Isles; through 5/13. • "Correggio and Parmigianino: Master Draftsmen of the Renaissance." More than 130 drawings from private and public collections by the two masters of the Emilian School of early-sixteenth-century Italy; through 5/6. • "Sultan 'Ali of Mashhad, Master of Nasta Liq." Examples of calligraphy by the master of NASTA LIQ, the writing style likened to flying geese that was favored in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Iran for poetical texts; through 4/22. • "Photography: Processes, Preservation, and Conservation." An exhibition celebrating the museum's new Sherman Fairchild Center for Works on Paper and Photograph Conservation, exploring various photographic processes and methods of conservation; through 5/6 • "Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Chinese Paintings From the Robert H. Ellsworth Collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art"; through 8/19. • "A Century of Design, Part III: 1950–1975." The third in a four-part series of exhibitions surveying twentieth-century design in all media; through 4/1. • "Rain From the Moon: Silver in Ancient Peru." Approximately 130 silver objects from private and public collections in the United States; through 4/22. • 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; $10 contribution, $5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45 (*closes at 5:15 between April and September*); $10, $5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library

"*Jean Poyet: Artist to the Court of Renaissance* France." The first one-person show dedicated to the work of the fifteenth-century French manuscript illuminator who worked for the courts of Louis XI, Charles VIII, and Louis XII; through 5/6. • "The World Observed: Five Centuries of Drawings From the Collection of Charles Ryskamp." Works from the collection of the former director of the Morgan Library and the Frick Collection; through 5/9. • 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.-Thurs. 10:30-5, Fri. 10:30-8, Sat. 10:30-6, Sun. 12-6; $8, $6 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio

"Antonio Frasconi: Langston Hughes's *Let America B*
America Again, a Portfolio of Woodcuts, 1997–98." A
recent suite of prints by the internationally recognize
master of the woodcut medium; through 5/20.
"Contemporánea 2001: Neighbors—An Installatio
by Leandro Erlich." A site-specific installation tha
transforms a typical apartment-building corridor int
a confounding space of peepholes, locked doors, and

Photograph courtesy of Grey Art Gallery

strange elevator; through 5/20. • "Here & There/Aquí y Allá: Six Artists From San Juan." Works in various media by six contemporary artists living in Puerto Rico; through 5/20. • 1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.-Sun. 11-5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art

"African Forms." Handcrafted objects from more than 156 ethnic groups and 34 African nations, among them clothing, jewelry, kitchen utensils, devotional objects, and musical instruments; through 8/8. • 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30, Sat. and Sun. noon-6; $5, $2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art

"ABCD: A Collection of Art Brut." *Art brut* works by Darger, Mackintosh, Ramirez, Wölfli, and others, from the collection of the Paris-based foundation ABCD (Art Brut Connaissance & Diffusion); through 7/28. • Two Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.-Sun. 11:30-7:30; free.and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art

"Andreas Gursky." A retrospective of works by the German photographer covering 1984 to the present and exploring such subjects as tourism, architecture, sporting events, and techno-music raves; through 5/15. • "Workspheres." An exhibition examining the changing nature of the workplace and the role of design in creating solutions to accommodate such changes, including works from LOT/EK architecture, the MIT Media Laboratory, Digital Image Design, IDEO, Jongeriuslab, and others; through 4/22. • "Van Gogh's Postman: The Portraits of Joseph Roulin." Five of the six paintings that the artist made of his friend and protector during 1888 and 1889; through 5/15. • "Projects 70: Janine Antoni, Shahzia Sikander, Kara Walker." Three new banners displayed on the museum's 53rd Street façade; through 3/13. • 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.-Tues., Thurs. 10:30-5:45, Fri. 10:30-8:15 (4:30-8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York

"Working Women: A Century of New York Junior League Volunteerism." Photographs, clothing, and ephemera documenting the movement founded by Mary Harriman in 1901; through 8/12. • "Guys & Dolls: The Fabled Musical of Broadway." Scene designs, costumes, photographs, and ephemera drawn from the archives of composer Frank Loesser and playwright Abe Burrows that reveal how they turned the Damon Runyon story "The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown" into the 1950 hit musical; through 6/10. • "The City Shops: Photographs by Martha Cooper and Fred W. McDarrah." Images from the sixties to the present documenting shops in New York City neighborhoods; through 4/15. • 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology

"Dreaming in Print: A Decade of *Visionaire*." An exhibition covering the first ten years of the multi-format magazine of fashion and art; through 4/21. • "Belgian Fashion Design: Antwerp Style." A survey of modern Belgian fashion design as seen through more than 100 clothing ensembles dating from 1982 to the present; through 4/14. • Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.-Fri. noon-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

National Academy of Design

"Selections From the Collection." Recently acquired works by National Academicians Sam Gilliam, Red Grooms, Malcolm Morley, and Larry Rivers, as well as masterworks by William Merritt Chase, Asher B. Durand, John Singer Sargent, George Tooker, and others; through 5/6. • "The Cos Cob Art Colony: Impressionists on the Connecticut Shore." Works by the group of American artists who gathered in the Cos Cob section of Greenwich, Connecticut, between 1890 and 1920, among them Childe Hassam, Theodore Robinson, John Twachtman, and J. Alden Weir; through 5/13. • 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs. 12-5, Fri. 10-6, Sat. and Sun. 10-5; $5.

New Museum of Contemporary Art

"Paul McCarthy." The first U.S. survey of the Los Angeles-based artist's work, a fusion of sculpture and performance characterized by combinations of pop-culture clichés, social taboos, and art-historical references; through 5/13. • 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. noon-6, Thurs.-Sat. noon-8 (free Thurs. 6-8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library

"Heading West: Mapping the Territory." Sheet maps, photographs, atlases, and books relating to the mapping of the American West from the collection of the library's Map Division; 3/9–5/19. • "Drawings by Charles Addams." A rotating selection of drawings by the *New Yorker* cartoonist; through 6/30. • Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089), Mon. 10-6, Tues. and Wed. 11-7:30, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free.

New-York Historical Society

"Irwin Silver: Nightwalks." Photographs of New York City at night that were taken by Silver between 1979 and 1989; through 5/20. • "The Sight of Music: Prints From the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams." Twentieth-century prints offering visual interpretations of music, by Chuck Close, Red Grooms, Roy Lichtenstein, and others; through 6/17. • 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.-Sun. 11-5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center

"Almost Warm and Fuzzy: Childhood and Contemporary Art." Works that address childhood by more than 30 American and international contemporary artists, among them Mike Kelley, Jeff Koons, Laurie Simmons, and Tim Rollins and K.O.S.; through 4/8. • "Erik Steinbrecher: Couch Park." An installation of new works on paper by the Swiss artist; through 4/8. • "Georges Adéagbo: *Abraham—L'ami de Dieu*." Installations by a West African artist that combine paintings, sculptures, books, handwritten texts, photographs, newspaper articles, and objects; through 3/29. • 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. 12-6; $5 suggested donation.

Queens Museum of Art

"Gio Ponti: A Metaphysical World." Furniture, sculpture, and drawings by the groundbreaking Italian designer and founder of *Domus* magazine, including his Superleggera chair of 1957 made for Cassina; through 5/20. • "Around, Around, and Away—Not-a-Superhero and the Myth of New York." A wall drawing by Luca Buvoli accompained by recorded narration and sound installations by Jeffrey Lependorf; through 5/27. • "Heart of Glass." Works by seven artists who take a conceptual and poetic approach to glass, among them Josiah McElheny, Katy Schimert, Kiki Smith, and Not Vital; through 5/27. • New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Tues.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. and Sun. 12-5; $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem

"Glenn Ligon: Stranger." Ten works from the artist's series of stenciled coal-dust paintings that were inspired by James Baldwin's *Stranger in the Village* (1953), in which the writer chronicled his experiences living in a small village in Switzerland; through 4/1. • "Material and Matter." Works in all media from the museum's permanent collection, by Willie Cole, Leonardo Drew, David Hammons, Odili Donald Odita, Alison Saar, James VanDerZee, and others; through 4/1. • "John Bankston: The Capture and Escape of Mr. M, Chapter I." Paintings on paper that illustrate the story of the abduction, enslavement, rescue, and escape of Mr. M, an "everyman," and that borrow imagery from nineteenth-century slave narratives, science fiction, and fairy tales; through 4/1. • 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed., Thurs., Sat., and Sun. noon-6, Fri. 12-8; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art

"Kenneth Josephson: A Retrospective." The first full-scale assessment of the work of this photographer, from his Conceptualist works of the sixties and seventies to his more recent images of street life in India, nudes, and European landscapes; through 5/27. • "The Things Themselves: Pictures of Dust by Vik Muniz." The artist's photographs of his drawings of dust based on photographs of minimalist sculptures in the museum's permanent collection; through 5/20. • "A Way With Words: Selections From the Whitney Museum of American Art." Text-based works by 12 artists, among them Glenn Ligon, Suzanne McClelland, Shirin Neshat, Richard Prince, and Christopher Wool; through 3/30. • 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues.-Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri. 1-9 (pay what you wish every Fri. 6-9); $10, $8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris

"A Way With Words: Selections From the Whitney Museum of American Art." Fourteen text-based works by twelve contemporary artists, among them Glenn Ligon, Suzanne McClelland, Shirin Neshat, Jack Pierson, and Christopher Wool; through 3/30. • 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.-Fri. 11-6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's East

3/13 at 10 and 2: "Nineteenth-Century European Art." On view from 3/10. • 219 E. 67th St. (212-606-0430).

Doyle

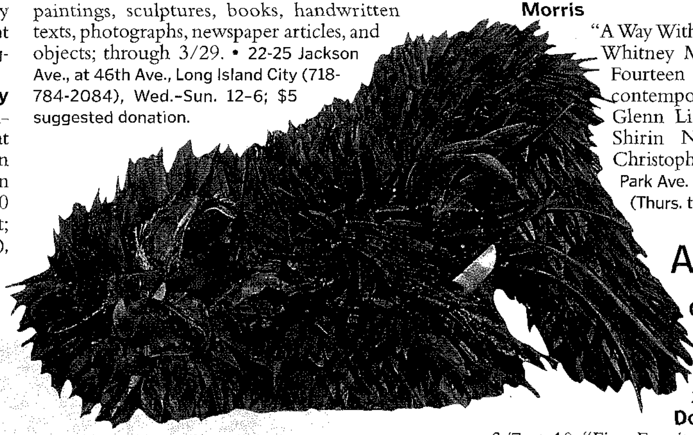
3/7 at 10: "Fine Furniture, Decorations, and Paintings." On view from 3/3. • 175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730).

Sotheby's

3/8 at 10:15: "Nineteeth-Century Paintings." On view from 3/2. • 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000).

Swann Galleries

3/8 at 10:30 and 2:30: "Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Prints and Drawings." On view from 3/3. • 104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710).



Talent

Rubber Made

Chakaia Booker's sculpture is that rare thing: art that doesn't just make passive-aggressive, politically correct statements about environmental hazards but actually puts the offending material—in her case, discarded car and bicycle tires and inner tubes that she finds on the streets—to inspired use. Her latest works include freestanding pieces of braided and wound tire (above, *Low Maintenance*, 2001) as well as geometric shapes cut from whole tires to reveal their textured innards. At Marlborough Chelsea, 211 West 19th Street; through March 24.

Photograph courtesy of Marlborough Chelsea.

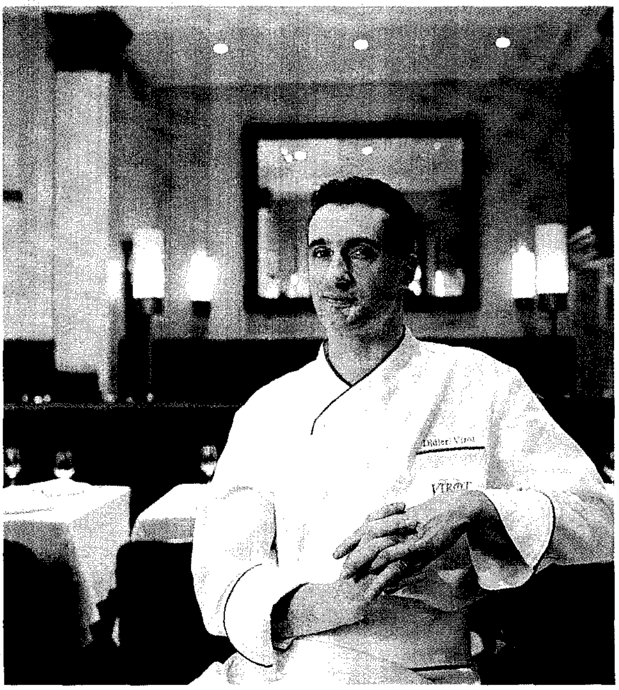
Restaurants

Edited by Robin Raisfeld
& Rob Patronite

Talent

Dylan's Opening Act

When Charlie Palmer recruited a chef (and partner) for the restaurant at the new Dylan hotel, he plucked Didier Virot (pictured) out of anything but obscurity. Before opening **Virot** in the Beaux Arts–style room that used to be the Chemists' Club ballroom, replete with twenty-foot coffered ceilings and grand fireplace, Virot had been toiling away under Jean-Georges Vongerichten. Now he's serving $49 prix fixe meals of his own design, featuring the luxurious likes of scallops baked in the shell with sea urchin, and broiled crispy squab with oatmeal-porcini cake. And upstairs, the mezzanine lounge is a sort of anti-Whiskey of marble café tables, dark walnut woodwork, and sophisticated snacks like cornmeal-tempura shrimp and foie gras terrine with rutabaga and artichokes. (52 East 41st Street; 646-658-0266.)



New and Noteworthy

Acqua Santa
The name means "holy water" in Italian. But secular types shouldn't read too much into that—any worshiping at Mario La Manno's laid-back, candlelit trattoria is for his rustic Italian cooking—thin-crust pizzas, simple pastas, and entrées like a red-wine-and garlic-sauced pork tenderloin. And the holiest water on the premises comes in a bottle with a Calabria label. • 556 Driggs Ave. at N. 7th St., Brooklyn (718-384-9695). (M)

Adä
As you might guess from the Murano-glass chandeliers and bas-relief nudes, this isn't your run-of-the-mill curry kitchen. Your dinner choices are limited to two streamlined prix fixe menus that run $55 and $65, and feature newfangled novelties like salmon quenelles with cashew rice and fresh coconut curry, garam masala quail with date-and-pistachio pillau, and wild-mushroom biryani with white-truffle oil. • 208 E. 58th St. (212-371-6060). (M–E)

★ Alain Ducasse at the Essex House
After a harrowing ride through the critics' spanking machine, eight-Michelin-star chef Alain Ducasse has emerged if not triumphant then at least standing. All his Cartier pens have been dutifully stolen, the array of mysterious knives presented in a leather case is gone, but the extravagantly Art Deco cocoon of a room feels more like a $160-prix fixe Michelin supernova now that the kitchen has pulled up its socks. Dishes that were very good to begin with have gotten even better—pea soup with crab cakes; silken woodcock, pheasant, and foie gras terrine; halibut with sea-urchin custard; glorious cheese; luscious rhubarb clafouti—and even the few disappointments don't sting so badly now that the chastised Ducasse has shown us his warm and cuddly side. • 155 W. 58th St. (212-265-7300). (E)

★ Aleutia
You may have to navigate past the murky leather swathed bar crowd and scurry up the industrial steps to escape their piercing mating calls, but forsooth, there is light at the top of the stairs. In fact, if Aleutia is willing to shift its priorities a bit, it has the potential of being considered among the city's most inventive and satisfying seafood restaurants. Vibrantly flavored dishes like citrus grilled octopus or pancetta wrapped cod provide life preserving—make that affirming distractions—from the hormonally raging sea around you. • 220 Park Ave. So. (212-529-3111). (E)

★ Annisa
Deft designer tricks like a raised dining space in soothing shades of off-white, and secluded nooks give this room a dignified grandeur, and the food backs it up. Chef Anita Lo finds inspiration everywhere from Shanghai (soup dumplings crowned with seared foie gras) to Provence (chickpea-stuffed zucchini blossoms with tomato and saffron sauces). The name means "women" in Arabic, so pay special attention to the gender-specific wine list. • 13 Barrow St. (212-741-6699). (M–E)

★ AZ
If you think pan-Asian fusion is so last decade, make haste to the Flatiron triplex that used to be Flowers, remade with a glass elevator and retractable roof and now home to chef Patricia Yeo and her inspired culinary inventions. What works? A trio of sensational chutneys on Indian flatbread, and lapsang souchon-smoked quail with scallion pancakes, for starters. A street-level lounge caters to lighter appetites. • 21 W. 17th St. (212-691-8888). (E)

★ Baldoria
Frank Pellegrino Jr.'s father earned the nickname Frankie No after years of politely declining requests for reservations at Rao's, his ten-table East Harlem celebrity hangout. Junior offers better odds in the theater district: 136 seats, plus a raw bar upstairs. A fugitive from Felidia's posh kitchen adds some verve to the home-style Neapolitan seafood salad and roasted peppers Pellegrino borrowed from his dad uptown. • 249 W. 49th St. (212-582-0460). (E)

Banjara
In spite of its location amid all those cookie-cutter curry cookers, Banjara is an oasis on Little India's restaurant row. The room and adjoining lounge are cliché-free. And chef Tuhin Dutta's unusual regional dishes like juicy clay-oven chicken marinated in wine and cream, and dumpakht (think supercolossal Indian pot pie) should dispel any worries that the street's mythical underground shared kitchen has taken on a new client. • 97 First Ave. at 6th St. (212-477-5956). (M)

★ Brasserie 8½
At this souped-up designer bookend to the newly modish Brasserie, you get big brasserie dishes plus a pumpkin-carpeted diva staircase entrance, and two subterranean airport-lounge-style bars. The simpler menu choices tend to be better, like the frisée salad and the cornflake-crusted crab cakes. The evening scene is overcooked, but lunch at bar No. 2 (the blue-green one) is better. • 9 W. 57th St. (212-829-0812). (M–E)

Chazal
What do France and Italy have in common? Impeccable fashion sense, chauvinistic attitudes about food and wine, and the Mediterranean, the food of which happens to be the unifying force at this collaboration between the owners of Bice and Ferrier, and architect (and partner) Jeffrey Beers. The broad menu specializes in exotic preparations of mussels and carpaccios, each available ten different ways. • 41 Madison Ave., at 26th St. (212-545-8555). (M)

Chinghalle
The name of Mark Straussman's (Campagna) frenetic new contribution to the meatpacking district means "wild boar" in Italian, although the spelling's been altered, presumably to attract a wider clientele. The menu mingles artful down-home Mulberry Street cooking with an odd variety of New Country favorites like St. Louis ribs and a gelato banana split. Stick to the mostly delicious Italian food (try the three-cheese pizza, and spaghetti alla Nonna). And try to secure one of the vintage Belgian train-car booths, to keep from getting trampled by all the rowdy bankers. • 50 Gansevoort St. (212-242-3200). (M)

★ Chow Bar
Chef-partner Peter Klein started out cooking at China Grill and El Teddy's, then parlayed that spicy Chino-Latino experience into a lucrative cross-country consulting gig. Luckily for us, he's settled down in the West Village, where's he's turning out addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles. Potent house cocktails fuel a lively bar crowd, which seems ecstatic to finally find a quasi-exotic neighborhood place to call its own. • 230 W. 4th St. (212-633-2212). (M)

Commune
If you're envisioning a vegan paradise of skinny hippies in millet-dusted overalls, think again. In fact, think dark, loud, and populated by a scantily clad clientele that tends to congregate around the onyx bar and communal table. Co-owner Matthew Kenney takes the same comfort-food tack as at his other downtown

Photograph by Bruce Katz.

hot spot, Canteen, except here the macaroni and cheese is truffled. • 12 E. 22nd St. (212-777-2600). (M)

Curry Leaf

While the Curry Hill competition focuses on the food of specific subcontinental regions—or, at the very least, hews to the meat-eating north or the veggie-oriented south—the idea here is to expand the edible horizons by offering Kashmiri chicken korma alongside Pakistani chana masala and Goan lamb vindaloo. There's more to Indian food, after all, than curry powder—there's the leaf, too, used here as a garnish. • 99 Lexington Ave., at 27th St. (212-725-5558). (M)

★ D'Artagnan, The Rotisserie

After fifteen years of selling foie gras and game to restaurants, D'Artagnan has opened its own: a narrow, high-ceilinged duplex countrified with tiled floors, rough ocher walls, a communal table, and Basque linens. Besides the signature terrines and charcuterie, there's seriously rib-sticking Gascon fare like cassoulet, spit-roasted free-range chicken, and "la garbure et son chabrot," a duck-confit soup dense enough to be eaten with a fork—and the broth drunk in the true Gascon style, directly from the bowl. • 152 E. 46th St. (212-687-0300). (M–E)

★ Del Frisco's

Want to see what mahogany fashioned by testosterone looks like? This is without question the most urbanely elegant steakhouse you will ever see, its meat locker filled with terrific beef. Now if they can only figure out how to get their staff up to the level of their surroundings and kitchen. The place is New York landmark potential. • 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-575-5129). (E)

★ Dim Sum gogo

What do you get when a French-American food writer (Colette Rossant) collaborates with a Hong Kong chef (Guy Lieu)? Dumpling dough flavored with beet juice, seasoned beef patties on steamed buns with taro fries, roast chicken smothered with fried garlic stems, and 24 kinds of dumplings. Plus four variations on the dough-wrapper theme, four different sauces, and microwave-safe takeout containers. • 5 E. Broadway (212-732-0797). (I–M)

★ The Dining Room

You know how you love cooking those intimate dinners at home for just you and your close friends? Oh, you don't. Well then don't you wish you were at one? This scrumptious example of turning lemons into lemon soufflé not only transforms an awkward layout into a series of cozy hideaways but it gets you all warm and snuggly with hearty American cuisine that surprisingly weighs less than the conversations around it. • 154 E. 79th St. (212-327-2500). (M–E)

District

At this new hotel restaurant, David Rockwell's design makes playful reference to the theater-district locale, and Sam DeMarco's menus make mouthwatering reference to the fun, original food he popularized downtown at First. For breakfast, there's the Scramble (smoked salmon, cream-cheese fondue, latkes, and dill-caper gremolata). For lunch, "double features" like potato pierogi with a brisket sandwich. Plus a $28 pre-theater dinner and a late-night "mini-bar." • 130 W. 46th St. (212-485-2999). (M)

★ Esca

Somewhere in between overseeing Babbo and Lupa, taping his cooking show, and just basking in the glory of his own undeniable greatness, Mario Batali has found time to earn another gastronomic gold star. At Esca, the overachiever in the orange clogs, partner Joe Bastianich, and chef David Pasternack do for Southern Italian seafood what Le Bernardin has done for French: The poured concrete bar with a built-in conduit for ice and oysters is an inspired take on raw-hellfish service; crudo (think Italian sashimi) is incredibly fresh and of the highest quality; pastas like paghetti with fresh chiles, mint, and a one-pound obster are irresistible. And the whole fish for two, oasted in a sea-salt crust that's cracked tableside, is a iveting performance worthy of the theater-district locale. • 402 W. 43rd St. (212-564-7272). (M–E)

★ Fleur de Sel

Chef Cyril Renaud wanted his first restaurant to be a personal statement. So he hung his own watercolors, painted the menu covers, and named the place after the highly prized, hand-harvested sea salt that's native to Brittany, just like him. His $52 prix fixe menu is small and changes daily, so there's no telling when you might see that lobster-avocado salad or venison fillet with juniper berries and orange zest again. • 5 E. 20th St. (212-460-9100). (M–E)

★ 44 & X Hell's Kitchen

John Tesar's inspired new American cooking packs this handsome room nightly with Hell's Kitchen locals and clued-in theatergoers, happy to find such good food and friendly service this far west. After feeding Wall Street warriors downtown at Vine, Tesar's traded in some of his fancier flourishes for a renewed focus on down-home dishes like rich and gooey mac-and-cheese, crispy buttermilk fried chicken and chive waffles, and individual meat loaf swathed in tomato sauce. • 622 Tenth Ave. at 44th St. (212-977-1170). (M–E)

★ Gnocco Caffe

Co-owner Pierluigi Palazzo named this East Village café after the traditional Modenese snack of crispy, puffy fried dough, usually served with prosciutto di Parma. But just to complicate matters, the gently-priced menu also offers two versions of gnocchetti (an entirely different, equally delicious thing), plus well-dressed, unusually fresh salads and an unassuming pork tenderloin lavished with Parmigiano-Reggiano shavings and an aged-balsamic emulsion. • 337 E. 10th St. (212-677-1913). (I)

★ Grand Sichuan Int'l Midtown

Each successive branch of this Szechuan chainlet has become progressively glitzier, culminating in this location's chandeliers and wall to wall carpeting. What separates this one from the kung pao pack is menu oddities like the eight dishes inspired by a Chinese TV show and a super-spicy category called "Mao's home cooking." (The chairman liked his chili peppers—who knew?) • 745 Ninth Ave., nr. 50th St. (212-582-2288). (I)

Grappa Café

A culinary coup on a congested stretch of Court Street known primarily for fast food and red sauce, where chef Anthony Parascondola—a veteran of Picholine, Remi, and Maxim's—revs up juicy chicken breast with pan-seared gnocchi and lemon-rosemary jus; swaps lamb shank for veal in his osso buco; and packs risotto with wild mushrooms, smoked duck, and truffle oil, a tribute, perhaps, to Picholine's signature dish. • 112 Court St., Brooklyn (718-237-4024). (M)

★ Hampton Chutney Co.

SoHo can be a soulless place, not to mention maddeningly expensive, and in desperate need of good karma and cheap, delicious grub. This 18-seat offshoot of a popular Amagansett enterprise satisfies both criteria with its Indian-chant soundtrack, gurgling fountain, and addictive dosas and uttapa made from rice-and-lentil flour and stuffed or topped with everything from traditional spiced-potato-masala to untraditional tuna and avocado ($6.50 to $10.50). Plus daily soups, chai teas, cardamom coffee, and fudgy brownies. • 68 Prince St. (212-226-9996). (I) ($)

Hudson Cafeteria

The room is big, dark, incredibly handsome, cavernous, more humming than boisterous, unfocused but friendly. Think of Hudson Cafeteria as a community center for the privileged. And while the food tries to be more ambitious than its downtown counterpart, Canteen, the stuff that makes the surprisingly diverse customers happiest is beef stew, macaroni and cheese (without the foie gras), and a banana split. It's become very canny to claim discomfort with comfort food, but those eating it here want more and couldn't care less. • 356 W. 58th St. (212-554-6500). (M–E)

La Palapa

The chef at this friendly East Village oasis grew up in Mexico, under the pervasive culinary spell of cookbook author and avid gardener Diana Kennedy, a family friend. That might account for the menu's reliance on fresh herbs, and its creativity. Rices are flavored with tomato, saffron, and tomatillo; moles concocted from sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, and guajillo chiles. The skirt steak soaks up its tequila marinade, cactus comes in a casserole, and chiles rellenos float uncharacteristically in tomato broth. • 77 St. Marks Pl. (212-777-2537). (I–M)

Le Souk

On a rapidly gentrifying Alphabet City block, two Egyptian brothers have carved out their own North African niche and accessorized it with Moroccan tile, glowing lanterns, and camel-skin chairs. A Tunisian chef oversees an evolving menu of assorted tagines and couscous, and meze like calves' liver and Merguez sausage. But food is only half the story. Linger long enough to smoke a hookah and admire the belly dancer. • 47 Ave. B (212-777-5454). (I–M) ($)

★ Le Zinc

Once you open a place like Chanterelle, where do you go from there? If you're Karen and David Waltuck, you head two blocks south and two blocks east to open a casual bistro—the perfect spot to unwind after a long night shaving truffles. The menu, a French framework embellished with Asian, Jewish, and Hungarian highlights, reads like the homespun work of someone who's sown his wild *hautes*: charcuterie, steak-frites, crispy duck wings, Grandma Gaby's stuffed cabbage. A burger, even. And nothing over $19. • 139 Duane St. (212-513-0001). (I–M)

★ Los Dos Molinos

Not since Drew flashed Dave has Manhattan witnessed a hotter display than the one at Los Dos Molinos—the Union Square branch of the popular Arizona restaurant. The slow, satisfying burn begins with chips and fiery salsa and continues with familiar but superlative Mexican-American fare. Entrées like irresistibly hot "adovada" pork ribs come with rice and beans, a good homemade flour tortilla, and an apology in advance printed on the menu: "Sorry we do not provide a mild sauce, I do not know how to make 'mild,' " reads the chef's mission statement–indemnity clause. • 119 E. 18th St. (212-505-1574). (I–M)

★ Lotus

Everything you wanted from a trendy club-bar-restaurant and less. Less attitude, less discomfort, less elbow contact, and less forgettable food. Lotus is a blooming surprise. A slight kitchiness keeps it warm. Nice guy owners keep it friendly. And chef Richard Farnabe keeps you well fed. Think of the velvet rope outside as a ribbon. And Lotus as a gift. • 409 W. 14th St. (212-243-4420). (M–E)

★ Mangiarini

There may be more Italian restaurants on the Upper East Side than there are cannoli on Mulberry Street, but few as bare-boned chic as this one. The designer of the Calvin Klein boutique went commensurately minimalist at this narrow 30-seater, where spaghetti with lemon and basil and sandwiches like prosciutto and melted goat cheese on semolina flatbread are as stylishly stripped down as the décor. • 1593 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (212-734-5500). (I)

★ Mary's Fish Camp

Here's a tip for anyone who's ever paced up and down Cornelia Street waiting for a vacant stool at Pearl Oyster Bar: The West Village is now home to *two* sources of world-class lobster rolls, silken clam chowder, and fragrantly moist, herb-stuffed whole fish. One of Pearl's chef-partners left to open this sunny corner spot equipped with a tin ceiling, a curved stainless-steel counter (ten tables, too), and new addi-

Ground Rules

These listings are a selective guide to the city's restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. Stars (★) indicate our critics' recommendations, either for outstanding overall quality or in recognition of at least one exceptional feature, and are usually awarded after the restaurant has been formally reviewed. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: **(E)** = expensive; **(M)** = moderate; **(I)** = inexpensive. Restaurants listed accept all major credit cards, except where noted; **($)** = cash only; "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted card.

The Underground Gourmet

Inside Story

"We love Charleen," says Anne Rosenzweig about Charleen Badman, until recently the chef de cuisine at the Lobster Club, Rosenzweig's uptown bastion of haute comfort food. And as everyone knows, when you love something, you set it free—or at the very least, you back it in a solo venture. So last month, Badman and Rosenzweig (pictured, left to right) opened **Inside**, a casual Village restaurant serving what Rosenzweig calls "clean, fresh, whimsical Village food." Not to mention affordable: With every entrée below $20, the smallish seasonal menu is strategically priced for bi- or tri-weekly visits, not just the random special occasion. And to ensure repeat trips, Badman tinkers with everything, from appetizer to dessert, on a weekly basis. ("I wanted to take the panna cotta off," she says, but she changed her mind when four customers stormed the kitchen in protest.) Badman's style of cooking is influenced by her working vacations in places like Italy, where she learned to make ravioli, and Chez Panisse, where, she remembers fondly, "I cleaned a lot of morels." Last week, she was busying herself with a golden squash-and-sweet-potato chowder chock-full of ginger, savory braised lamb with olives and Indian cinnamon, melted leeks with mozzarella and Parmesan, and firm-fleshed trout stuffed with crunchy Jerusalem artichokes. She's implemented a bar menu of lighter bites like mussels and Welsh rabbit, and is gearing up for weekend brunch. But don't count on finding that famous lobster club sandwich. "I don't want the name of the restaurant to give the impression that I have to be stuck to any one thing," says Badman. She's lucky she doesn't have a sidewalk café. (9 Jones Street; 212-229-9999.) R.R.

Photograph by Bruce Katz

tions to the Pearl repertoire, like crispy kernel-studded corn fritters and a lush, sherry-enhanced lobster pot pie. • 246 W. 4th St. (646-486-2185). (M)

Mirchi

An up-to-date Indian restaurant that takes the street out of street food. The main attraction here is an open kitchen equipped with two *tawas*. The large saucer-shaped griddles that look like cast-iron gongs are used to prepare traditional Indian street food like tak-a-tak, a heavily spiced stir-fry of chopped vegetables and herbs, accessorized with chicken, lamb, or chicken liver, and served like tapas with little KFC-style dinner rolls. • 29 Seventh Ave. So. (212-414-0931). (I-M)

★ Mombar

An artist at heart, chef-owner Moustafa El Sayed designed and built this sort of Alice-in-Arabian-Wonderland dedicated to Egyptian clay-pot cookery, where teacups protrude from walls, and tabletops double as canvases for his surrealistic visions. And El Sayed is as creative with food as he is with paint and tile; his menu changes daily, depending on the season and the market. Try the meze plate, or the egga, a sort of Egyptian frittata, and then move on to El Sayed's raison d'être, the all-encompassing clay pot, which on any given night might be filled with stewed rabbit, lamb tagine, or chicken and olives.
• 25-22 Steinway St. (718-726-2356). (M)

Panino'teca 275

Sometimes Smith Street's great unfed masses crave something they can't find at any one of their cherished bistros. Something light. Something simple. Something delish. To sate those appetites, Kenneth Munz—in between action-packed shifts as Mercer Kitchen's sous chef—helps his wife, Dianna, press bresaola-and-pecorino panini and assemble truffle-cauliflower bruschetta at their comfortable, attractive panini and wine bar, perfect for lazy lingerers. • 275 Smith St., nr. Sackett St. (718-237-2728). (I-M) ($)

Pico

Chef John Villa (JUdson Grill) takes a new old-world approach at Pico, his stylish Portuguese-inspired restaurant in an old Bazzini nut plant in TriBeCa. Proximity to the Hudson befits mostly seafood starters like steamed cockles with fava beans and vinho verde while second courses like spit-roasted suckling pig with a citrus-and-honey glaze marry the rustic with the refined. The blue-and-gold color scheme is not the work of a Michigan State grad, but a tribute to Portugal's ubiquitous palette. • 349 Greenwich St. (212-343-0700). (E)

★ Pipa

Doug Rodriguez has done Nuevo Latino at Patria and Chicama. Now he's tackling old-world Spanish (sort of). A field trip to Galicia yielded dozens of recipes for tapas, casseroles, soups, and flatbreads, all of which undergo subtle and delicious transformation in the chef's inventive hands. To wit: bocarones in escabeche with almond-crusted queso de cabra, crispy anchovies wrapped in sage leaves, and churros with warm chocolate dipping sauce for dessert. Much more radical is the conversion of the old Parlour Cafe into a seductive Iberian oasis with serrano ham hanging from beams and walls studded with enough shells to stock Sanibel Island. • 38 E. 19th St. (212-677-2233). (M)

★ Quartino

All that separates this rustic Italian osteria and wine bar from the South Street Seaport is a few short blocks and one major mind-set. It's all about the good life, Italian-style, which of course involves wine, served by the mini-carafe; delectable cured meats and imported cheeses; pasta; pizza; strong espresso; and convivial conversation. But amazingly, no smoking. The owners may be Italian, but they're also (with one or two exceptions) doctors. • 21 Peck Slip (212-349-4433). (I-M)

Sabor

As the abiding popularity of tapas proves, grazing never goes out of style. Customize a tiered tray of pan-Latino nibbles like shrimp empanaditas, octopus salad, smoked-chicken croquettes, and tuna seviche and watch the Upper West Side roll by, in all its dog-walking, stroller-pushing glory. • 462 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-579-2929). (I-M)

★ A Salt & Battery

The folks from Tea & Sympathy have expanded their British empire with a fish-and-chips shop that literally reeks of authenticity. Aside from the main attraction, properly wrapped in British newspaper, there are mushy peas, pickled onions, Heinz baked beans, and the improbably edible deep-fried Mars Bars. Between orders, a relentlessly cheery staff spouts cockney slang while fry-chef Patsy Carroll—who used to cook in the British Merchant Navy and then, judging by his hoop earrings and Errol Flynn beard, turned pirate—cracks wise. • 112 Greenwich Ave. (212-691-2713). (I-M)

★ Sandro's

Has Roman chef Sandro Fioriti finally settled down? Those of us whose taste buds remember his signature crisp-fried baby artichokes, pan-fried calamari, and classic bucatini amatriciana from the original uptown Sandro's, all revived in this otherwise nondescript Chelsea storefront, can only hope. But judging by his recent restlessness, our advice is to get while the getting's good. • 200 Ninth Ave., nr. 22nd St. (212-633-8033). (M)

★ Sandwich Planet

Owner Will Brown got his start in the sandwich trade a dozen blocks north with his thriving Island Burgers and Shakes. At Planet, he reprises his boldly seasoned, lavishly garnished chicken churascos and hamburgers but also expands his Island oeuvre to include the kind of two-fisted retro sandwiches—Reubens, cheesesteaks, clubs, and croque-monsieurs—that have been displaced recently by wraps and other raised-pinky deviations. • 534 Ninth Ave., nr. 39th St. (212-273-9768). (I) ($)

★ Shelly's New York

The latest restaurant Shelly Fireman has created in his own image inhabits the space that was originally an Art Deco–era Horn & Hardart Automat. Only the assimilative Fireman would offer towering shellfish platters alongside newfangled chicken chow mein, barbecued ribs, and a burger audaciously crowned with seared foie gras and make it work. • 104 W. 57th St (212-245-2422). (M–E)

Tao Asian Bistro

The team behind Rue 57 has transformed the old Palace movie house into a pan-Asian place where the terminally indecisive can share spicy lobster roll with black caviar, Shanghai-style soup dumplings, $10-an-ounce Kobe beef with wasabi, and Peking duck

Book the "sky box," a private dining room where the projectionist's booth used to be, and gaze down on the sixteen-foot Buddha, keeping the peace no doubt. • 42 E. 58th St. (212-888-2288). (M)

★ Todd English's Olives NY
Chef Todd English has a genius for artful, Hungry-Man dishes. He stuffs his pastas with delectable fillings (sweet chestnuts, shredded veal) and slathers them with creamy cheeses. He moulds cupolas of foie gras flan, builds pagodas of hanger steak, constructs pill boxes of tuna tartare with crunchy shrimps buried at the base. It's delicious, but a little overwhelming, especially if you tag on thrombotic desserts like the peppermint bombe (creamy chocolate with mint syrup inside). The cramped, frenetic space (in the lobby of the Union Square W Hotel) makes lunchtimes a more restful experience. • 201 Park Ave. So. (212-353-8345). (E)

★ Viareggio
At first glance, there's little to distinguish this dining room from countless others. But the kitchen's another story. Chef Donato Deserio's deft touch with pastas like creamless rigatoni alla vodka reinvigorates old standards, and entrées like a subtle Parmigiano-Reggiano-crusted chicken breast in white wine taste almost new. As does the *amuse-bouche* of spicy tomato salsa, served with crispy fried- cheese wafers. • 1347 Second Ave., at 71st St. (212-585-2900). (M)

★ Vine
It will take a lot of duck confit with sweet-potato hash to make a village in the canyons of Wall Street. But the bold pioneers at Vine are game to gamble. Their bull-market menu is big on seafood like lobster pan roast with corn fritters and coconut-curried grilled shrimp. There's a quick-service café and grocery next door, and private party space (plus extra lunch seating) downstairs in what used to be, and still resembles, bank vaults. • 25 Broad St. (212-344-8463). (E)

★ Wallsé
Who knew veal goulash could be elegant? Kurt Gutenbrunner's version is an artful mound of tender meat you almost regret toppling. And though dishes like tafelspitz and wiener schnitzel seem like a culinary memoir, the guiding principle here is less goulash than Greenmarket. Local farmers supply Guttenbrunner with lemon thyme for his pike, heirloom tomatoes for his lamb salad, and the sweet strawberries that garnish his elderflower sorbet. Don't miss the quark dumplings. • 344 W. 11th St. (212-352-2300). (M-E)

Manhattan

Lower New York

★ Alfanoose
This spotless but otherwise nondescript falafel joint lanked by $10 discount emporiums, makes the est—and neatest—falafel sandwich in town. Cowner Mouhamad Shami meticulously rolls his exertly seasoned falafel and fresh condiments in an nusually thin and pliant pita, like a burrito, so that ll the harmonious components merge in every bite. t's also a great source for Middle Eastern appetizers, latbreads as well as suberb lamb or vegetarian ibbeh. • 150 Fulton St. (212-349-3622). (I)

★ Aquagrill
ver since we tasted chef-owner Jeremy Marshall's spired falafel-crusted salmon, the notion of a naked ink fillet has been tough to swallow. But despite the igh level of cooking, an offbeat and well-priced ine list, and unexpected grace notes like a weloming *amuse-bouche* and complementary petits urs, it's still a rollicking neighborhood spot, where ou can park yourself at the lively bar and watch the exterous oyster shucker in action. • 210 Spring St. 12-274-0505). (M-E)

Balthazar
eith McNally has countless pacesetting restaurants his credit, but this is his masterpiece, an evocation a Paris brasserie that outglows anything within rie-tossing distance of the Seine. Yet for all its visu- impact, Balthazar boasts equally compelling fare: tender braised lamb shoulder gets served over garganelli pasta, shepherd's pie is made with duck, grilled tuna floats over tomato-and-saffron coulis. And its oyster bar, short ribs, bread, and service make you not give a damn whether you ever see the Eiffel Tower. • 80 Spring St. (212-965-1414). (M)

★ Bo Ky
There are 30 soups at Bo-Ky. The best way to order them is by number. Don't read closely to see what's in them. And don't ask. You don't want to know. Whether the meat is pork chop or beef belly or chicken leg, just savor the smells wafting up from those bowls of Chinese, Cambodian and Vietnamese home cooking. It is tremendous soup, in size, flavor, and content. And the prices are pocket change. • 80 Bayard St. (212-406-2292). (I) ($)

★ Bouley Bakery
Love him or hate him, there's no denying that the famously obstreperous David Bouley—bouncing between this kitchen and Danube—gets the job done. And his loyal clientele gratefully lap it up in the ethereal form of degustation menus revolving around superlative seasonal ingredients like skate steamed with fresh chamomile, say, or organic baby lamb with eggplant moussaka. • 120 W. Broadway (212-964-2525). (M-E)

Capsouto Frères
Landmark French bistro with talked-about soufflés. Flemish-style building hosts local business folks at lunch. Dinner is a New York mix of neighborhood regulars, tourists, and trekkers from uptown. Dishes to try include the terrine Provençal and the roast duckling with ginger-and-cassis sauce. • 451 Washington St. (212-966-4900). (M-E)

★ Chanterelle
The Waltucks, Karen and David, have specific ideas about how to make an evening unforgettable. The walls are without art. You will hear no music. Chairs are huge; plates are, too. The goal is to get you to concentrate solely on who you are with and what you are about to be presented—the stunning juxtapositions of David's quail and star anise, lamb with cumin crust, crabs in ginger and strawberry millefeuille with elderflower sorbet. • 2 Harrison St. at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E)

★ City Hall
Chef-owner Henry Meer may be imagineering Old New York, with back-lit photos of bygone street life, but he can't help refining it, too. The triple-tier "Chrysler" shellfish highrise is global gluttony via the jet stream. Chesapeake she-crab soup is creamy perfection. But go for the marvelous double steak on the bone, a behemoth served stunningly rare. • 131 Duane St. (212-227-7777). (M-E)

★ Danube
David Bouley's outrageous, highly lacquered, velvet-swathed, Klimt-deckled little dining room is beautiful, fun, funny, and romantic. And, via his chef de cuisine, Mario Lohninger, his bone-marrow dumplings, the Tyrolean wine soup, the braised beef cheeks, and even the Wiener schnitzel manages to be Austro-Hungarian but not too. • 30 Hudson St. (212-791-3771). (E)

Divine Bar
The jewel-toned Financial District branch of the popular Turtle Bay bar and lounge serves the same extensive selection of wine, and a similar menu of appetizer-size plates. Selections include a barbecued-buffalo sandwich, shrimp satay with hoisin sauce, and a wild-mushroom quesadilla. • 55 Liberty St., second floor (212-791-WINE). (I-M)

The Greatest Bar on Earth
This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers and, of course, tourists. The view, obviously, can't be beat, and the snacky menu includes bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M)

★ The Mercer Kitchen
Within Christian Liagre's conversion of a subterranean catacomb into a sultry, intimately shadowy quartet of fluid yet diverse sectors, executive chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten reveals how a few ingredients can create flavors that are lucid and com-

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pelling. Olive and radicchio join stewed rabbit, mint and coriander ring sea bass carpaccio, tomato soup is sparked by chili pepper and crabmeat. You may be sorry you never sprang for that loft on Spring. • 99 Prince St. (212-966-5454). (E)

★ Next Door Nobu
Set in a stunningly clever David Rockwell–designed room as homespun as it is elegant, Nobu Matsuhisa's simpler version of his South American–flecked Asian cooking matches its décor by making Nobu's genius even more accessible. The only thing we'd change is the no-reservations policy. Come early, come late, come on Monday. Come Saturday, if you're nuts. • 105 Hudson St. (212-334-4445). (M–E)

★ Nobu
There is not another experience like it in town. Nobu Matsuhisa is a chef of such wondrous originality that nothing on his menu is merely as it reads. Each dish reinvents your definition of what it should taste like. Teensy oysters make your eyes pop. Bonito soothes the throat like sable. Seaweed sparkles. The fake trees aren't necessary. Two bites and you're in Eden. • 105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (M–E)

Omen
Step off this quiet SoHo side street, and you're suddenly transported to Kyoto—a feeling that's reinforced by the traditional menu and decorative calligraphy and ceramics. • 113 Thompson St. (212-925-8923). (M–E) AE only

★ Pearl Oyster Bar
Milos may have a fish display as big as this joint's entire counter, but nothing can match this kitchen's preparatory skills. This ain't no Carnival Cruise. Keep your elbows in and your chin down, all the better to acknowledge a clam chowder revved up with smoky bacon, mussels in mustard cream, and a nutty grilled pompano in herbs. • 18 Cornelia St. (212-691-8211). (M)

★ 71 Clinton Fresh Food
Is there much call for Scottish salmon wrapped in avocado at the intersection of Clinton and Rivington Streets? Well, yes, judging by the hungry crowd cooling its heels at the bar. Jean Georges alum Wylie Dufresne cooks seemingly complicated, easy-to-eat food like beer-braised short ribs geometrically sculpted into a perfect square; and parsley-root purée with a little parsley-root raft of lump crabmeat. (To eat, capsize and stir.) The chef's dad, a warm and punny presence on the floor, compiled the winning wine list. • 71 Clinton St. (212-614-6960). (M)

★ Snack
Don't be fooled by the name: this tiny SoHo storefront is a full-fledged restaurant, open daily for lunch, dinner, and yes, snacks. The emphasis is on fresh Greek salads and meze, like tzatziki and skordalia, but the kitchen also turns out creative Greek-inspired sandwiches, roasted chicken, savory pastries stuffed with chicken and olives, and daily specials like pastitsio and braised lamb. And since this is New York and not Athens, you can scoop up your taramosalata with pita or have it slathered on a bagel from H & H. • 105 Thompson St. (212-925-1040). (I)

★ Wild Blue
It sounds like a bar right outside the NASA compound, but in fact, it's an intimate, upretentious room that doesn't try to compete with the famous view. Chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steak house in side dishes like creamed spinach and butternut-squash hash. Don't wait for a special occasion to take the 107-flight elevator ride. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E)

Windows on the World
Yes, tourists love it. But Michael Lomanaco's sophisticated American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs and lobster potpie with truffle cream manages to steal some attention away from the main attraction, that spectacular view of Manhattan Island. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E)

★ Zoë
The tables here are always jumping, cranked up with the buzz of post-orgasmic shoppers and SoHo tourists savvy enough to find their way to some of the best fussy American food in New York. Chef Kevin Reilly, whose mission is to keep the prize-winning all-American wine list in mind as he designs the menu, is properly obsessed with seasonal ingredients. And just-baked cookies, still warm from the oven, evoke memories of Mom. • 90 Prince St. (212-966-6722). (M–E)

Below 14th Street, East

★ Bond Street
The crowd is too cool, the rooms too cozy, the waiters way too pretty. No way is this anywhere you're going to get chirashi worth much more than a can of Bumble Bee. Boy, are you about to be surprised. With food this fresh, original, and vibrantly spiced, the kitchen can easily take on most traditional midtown sushi houses and wouldn't have to walk out of a room backwards if Nobu's troops were in attendance. • 6 Bond St. (212-777-2500). (M–E)

★ Five Points
Every neighborhood needs a place with a good bar, a serious kitchen, and zero pretensions. NoHo has one in this Med-American restaurant, where a split log running down the center of the dining room conveys a babbling brook. Zen though that may sound, chef Marc Meyer's hearty cooking is more boldly passionate than coolly contemplative. Duck-and-foie gras sausage and wood-oven roasted Magret duck show enough spikiness to make you look down and go "hmmmm" before you go back to the conversation. • 31 Great Jones St. (212-253-5700). (M)

★ Gotham Bar & Grill
Alfred Portale created a restaurant where anyone, dressed any way, is invited with affability to partake of his talent for making American cuisine exciting and as easy to fathom as a burger and fries. Even when faced with soft-shell crabs or squab, say, topped with potato purée and fava beans for the first time, Gotham customers attack their plates with a fearlessness suited to Great Adventure. Actually, this is a great adventure. • 12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (E)

★ Il Bagatto
Though so dark the menu can hardly be read and so deliriously energized you'd best be in the mood for a nonvintage bottle of red, Il Bagatto piles on super pastas, salads, and antipasti as full of sharp left hooks as that wine and as cheap as the hangover you'll have tomorrow. • 192 E. 2nd St. (212-228-0977). (I–M)

Osso Buco
Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. • 88 University Pl. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M)

★ Prune
There's not a wrinkled plum in sight at this American bistro. But chef Gabrielle Hamilton's childhood nickname indicates the sort of unpretentious home cooking at which she excels, a grab bag of eccentric, multicultural influences that is, at heart, American—as any place whose quirky bar menu includes Triscuits alongside serrano ham with fresh figs must be. Minus the traditional categories for appetizers, main courses, and sides, the menu gives as prominent placement to vegetables like creamed corn and roasted beets as to the more entrée-ish capon on a savory garlic crouton, or the pastrami duck breast with a rye-flavored, fried-shallot omelet. • 54 E. 1st St. (212-677-6221). (M)

★ 2nd Avenue Deli
A recent facelift struck fear in the hearts of those who believe that a true pastrami sandwich must be authenticated by grimy Formica and generations' worth of atmospheric shabbiness. But so far, so good. This East Village landmark continues to draw dedicated fressers with its great fries, chicken in the pot, the near-lethal hush puppy (a frank in a potato knish), and the hard-boiled service. • 156 Second Ave. (212-677-0606). (I–M)

Siren
Aside from some strange and funny cabaret acts and a D.J. spinning to a boisterous young crowd, the spotlight at this East Village mini supper club is on chef Patrick Fromm's accomplished French-and-Asian-accented American cooking. Try the triple-tiered appetizer trays the menu calls "trilogies," which include a choice of everything from spicy "lollipop" wings to foie gras to sashimi, or opt for more substantial fare like homemade tagliolini with wild mushrooms and barbecued filet mignon. • 12 St. Marks Place (212-995-9100). (M–E)

Below 14th Street, West

★ Babbo
Ever try goat cheese tortellini dusted in dried orange and wild fennel pollen? Or spicy lamb sausage romanced by mint love letters and a paste of sweet peas? Get ready to crave them. Ingredients you didn't expect or never heard of become unforgettable. Mario Batali's original yet airy Italian cooking will stun, fool, bewitch and ultimately obsess you. Just get it together to make another reservation before you leave. • 110 Waverly Pl. (212-777-0303). (E)

★ Da Silvano
Few of the fervent regulars here—including the city's media, fashion, and art-world elite—seem to recall an Italian restaurant whose menu wasn't sopping in red sauce before Da Silvano. The roasted standing duck is crackling, the lamb tender and moist, the artichoke salad as brash as the air around Montecatini. And not an eggplant-parmigiana hero in sight. • 260 Sixth Ave. (212-982-2343). (M–E)

★ 'ino
Named for panino, this cozy nook excels at crafting perfect Italian snacks to nibble with wine: crustless tramezzini, pressed panini, and bruschetta, all on great bread and enlivened by zesty condiments. Supplement your sandwich with a bowl of olives and a plate of cheese, and keep the motif going with a Nutella panino for dessert. Best of all, it's open for business from early morning until after midnight. • 21 Bedford St. (212-989-5769). (I) ($)

★ Isla
If nights in present-day Havana were this much fun, Castro could have taken over all of Central America. In fact, Isla has the same kind of slippery authenticity as Eydie Gormé's Spanish albums, but are those records great or what? With owner Diane Ghioto's dark-eyed sensuality seeing to your mood, the kitchen's brash originality seeing to your appetite, and a few Luna Rojas, the house drink, kicked back for good measure, it won't be long before you swear Eydie is singing in English. • 39 Downing St. (212-352-2822). (M–E)

★ Lupa
We love this down-home Roman trattoria and not just for Mario Batali's celebration of odd animal parts and Italian delicatessen, or for partner Joe Bastianich's bid to bring depth and finesse to a casual Village joint's wine service. We like the mood, the food, and the gentle prices, but so do legions of tuned-in New Yorkers. It's almost as tough a sanctum to crack as it pricier sibling, Babbo. • 170 Thompson St. (212-982-5089). (M)

★ Meigas
The décor is a little goofy and the location, on Hudson Street, in the Siberia of West SoHo, is a bust. Bu chef Luis Bollos's kitchen produces the best Spanish cuisine (Galician, actually) in town. In his hands, heft dishes like braised oxtail croquettes and roast suckling pig appear light, almost candied. His gazpacho—light confection, loaded with Maine lobster—make the usual approximations of this dish look lik crankcase oil. Trendy Iberian jellies and foams ar mostly relegated to dessert, of which a wondrou chocolate layer ganache is best. • 350 Hudson St. (212-627-5800). (M–E)

Osteria Fiorentina
Live piano and violin music lend this casual Italia restaurant that old-time Village ambience. The men offers standards like risotti, open ravioli, zuppa di clam and veal chops. • 281 Bleecker St. (212-633-2941). (M)

★ Pastis
Keith McNally's Pastis looks more like a grande Lucky Strike than a repro of the visually faultless Balthazar, but not only does the slight downshifting mak perfect sense; considering the tallow-rivulet-ribbone neighborhood, it also renders the new place instant less imposing. Service is breezier, the crowd more ge

Ask Gael

We're not fussy eaters, but we love being fussed over.

Given our town's ravenous appetite for what's new, it's easy to get distracted by trends and puffery. Mea culpa, **Primola**. It took me twenty years to find a night for supper at this unassuming hangout where a core of entitled East Siders go to be surrounded by their peers and pampered by Giuliano Zuliani. A mostly fussy gourmandlich pal, chiding me for overlooking this old reliable, insists on treating us. At his urging, we try the mozzarella-prosciutto-endive melt (a rubbery swamp I'd never order) and the whole roasted branzino served with fabulous chunks of roasted potato. Even he agrees the fish is far too dry. But we love the lush focaccia; the glistening fillets of fresh anchovy with roasted sweet peppers, raisins, and pine nuts (special of the day); a starter of clams and mussels in a fragrant broth; and the penne carrettiera (olives, capers, and fresh tomato). Slightly soggy tagliatelle emiliana is quickly forgotten as we tuck into the charred rare slices of bistecca fiorentina—perfumed with rosemary, garlic, and olive oil. Sightings of Karenna Gore, Linda Fairstein, and assorted real-estate mandarins add seasoning. (1226 Second Avenue, near 64th Street; 212-758-1775.)

nially noisy, and the only thing disappointing is that you don't live closer. • 9 Ninth Ave. (212-929-4844). (M)

★ Peanut Butter & Co.
Smooth or chunky is only the beginning: Savor the sticky stuff 21 different ways at this kitschy café, where you're transported back to elementary school with one bite of "ants on a log," celery sticks slathered with the peanut butter of your choice and studded with raisins. Request your Elvis (grilled peanut butter, banana, honey, bacon) on whole wheat if you must, though we're certain the King would disapprove. There must be a mom in the kitchen; sandwiches come with chips and carrot sticks, and they'll even cut off the crusts for you. • 240 Sullivan St. (212-677-3995). (I-M)

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Bambou
A hint of the tropics on 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry amid a relaxing, palm-fronded bar and dining room. • 243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M)

★ Chicama
Douglas Rodriguez is so disarmingly inventive that he could serve his spectacular seviches, his drippingly seductive goat stew, and his daunting, did-Mom-ever-make-it-like-this? suckling pig from a lean-to in Union Square and there'd be no room left for the other vendors. Instead, he inhabits a rustic dream hut that takes you somewhere north of Brazil, east of Mardi Gras, and south of Heaven. • 35 E. 18th St. (212-505-2233). (M-E)

★ City Bakery
No one comes close to Maury Rubin at satisfying our grown-up snacking impulse. Heavenly tarts, perfectly extured cookies and brownies, lusciously tart lemonades, ultra-thick and creamy hot chocolate—even homemade marshmallows—beckon irresistibly from he counter. Pre-dessert, there are inspired sandwichs like roasted pear and ricotta salata and the only sald bar we obsess over. • 22 E. 17th St. (212-366-1414). (I-M)

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel
Commuters and business travelers can enter this formal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central Terminal, for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full meal from the French-influenced American menu. • 42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M-E)

★ Gramercy Tavern
Tavern has become Danny Meyer's most appealing restaurant, with a no reservations discount bar room to make one churlish for not living or working nearby. Chef Tom Colicchio pairs foods folks crave with elements they usually don't. Roast sirloin of beef comes with braised beef cheeks. Crabmeat fondue contains sea urchin. Not only does each gamble pay off, but so tickled are diners by their nascent daring that on their next visit, damned if they don't demand sweetbreads with Jerusalem artichokes and roasted cod with brussels sprouts. • 42 E. 20th St. (212-477-0777). (M-E)

Metronome
This lofty Flatiron space is well suited to private functions, but even the lone diner will find the Deco design welcoming and the food—riffs on a Mediterranean theme like "pinchos" of vegetables with goat cheese, and za'atar-crusted rack of lamb—satisfying. Live jazz performed Wednesday through Saturday. • 915 Broadway, at 21st St. (212-505-7400). (M)

Mizu Sushi
The owners of River, uptown's Thai-Vietnamese hybrid, have let the culinary current take them south to Gramercy Park and entirely new Asian territory. Contemporary materials like slate and stainless steel are softened by a series of rice-paper-wrapped oak frames, some of them fashioned into a "palm tree" centerpiece. And though the menu hews to tradition, the sushi chef has some tricks up his sleeve, like the Crazy Roll of tempura-breaded spicy tuna with flying fish roe. • 29 E. 20th St. (212-505-6688). (M)

★ Tarabya
This Turkish restaurant formerly known as Gyroland has changed its name and its décor. While the kitchen still has a magic hand with meze, pide, kofte, and doner kebab, all references to Philly cheesesteaks and California burgers have vanished. On weekends, a two-piece band with a charismatic singer in a purple suit draws a big, adoring, mostly Armenian-American crowd, but early in the week things are slow. So go soon, and often—before this talented kitchen is forced to revive its California burger. • 351 Second Ave. (212-254-3200). (M-E)

★ Tocqueville
At the loveliest new mom and pop shop in town, Marco Moreira and Jo-Ann Markovitzky have taken what they've learned from a decade of catering and added to it all the things they couldn't do in someone else's home to come up with a gently idiosyncratic nook that will take about twenty minutes to charm you. • 15 E. 15th St. (212-647-1515). (M-E)

★ Union Pacific
A dramatic otherworldly rain-forest setting is a fitting stage for wunderkind turned matinee idol Rocco DiSpirito's wildly inventive, wonderfully weird cooking. Sweet, small scallops nuzzled in their shells by blobs of sea urchin with an essence of tomato, mustard oil, mirin and black mustard. Halibut braised in goose fat with ginger jus and shallot cracklings. Mango and papaya carpaccio with pineapple sherbet and candied cilantro. Do these sound like the delusions of a madman? In less capable hands, maybe; in DiSpirito's, it's pure genius. • 111 E. 22nd St. (212-995-8500). (E)

★ Union Square Cafe
Nowhere else are uncommon combinations such as rhubarb-blood-orange chutney and wasabi mashed potatoes so seamlessly incorporated into dishes (so as to never frighten the buttoned-down natives). Surprisingly, vegetarians will eat better here than at any of their hallowed haunts. The bar is a great place to lunch solo. And the devil's food truffle with chocolate sauce can make you act the fool. • 21 E. 16th St. (212-243-4020). (M-E)

★ Veritas
Does the wine list make the restaurant? Luckily, if you've got a chef like Scott Bryan whipping up arctic-char carpaccio with warm fingerling potato salad and a sublime, marrow-and-wine-fortified fillet of beef, it doesn't have to. His elegant American fare ($68 prix fixe only) perfectly complements the massive cellar, a joint obsession of the owners, who seem to take intense pleasure in sharing their private collection with the paying public. • 43 E. 20th St. (212-353-3700). (E)

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar
This national chain invades Manhattan's freshly scrubbed and reinvented 42nd Street with an eager-to-please, affordable menu heavy on burgers, steak, and fajitas. • 234 W. 42nd St. (212-391-7414). (I-M)

★ F&B
F&B, which stands for Frites and Beignets, is clearly the Tiffany of fast food. (Is that the subliminal message of those robin's-egg-blue walls?) A choice of sauces—caramel, chocolate, mango—for dipping beignets makes donut-dunking seem desperate. A split of champagne is served in the bottle with a blue straw. Hot dogs come in a dozen guises including the Great Dane (remoulade, roasted onions, cucumber slices). And the superlative fries alone are worth a trip. • 269 W. 23rd St. (646-486-4441). (I)

Hush
Part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate the New American menu, served in shareable portions. • 17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I-M)

hotograph by Patrik Rytikangas.

Ohm
An all-in-one entertainment center offering dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an eclectic menu including sesame chicken tenders, Black Angus steak, and grilled salmon with lemon-caper beurre blanc. • 16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E)

☆ The Red Cat
Not every artist is starving, and the ones with bank accounts and hearty appetites would do well to make this their home away from home among the West Chelsea galleries. Hanging lanterns, barn siding, and artwork contribute to the funky décor, and the bar is the roomy, welcoming sort that solo diners find appealing. It's hard to find a clunker on the Med-American menu. The quick saute of zucchini with toasted almonds is something your mother would never have imagined—a vegetable that could spoil your appetite. • 227 Tenth Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-242-1122). (M)

Simply Pasta
Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant has a specialty martini list, and offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and pastas—over two dozen of them. • 120 W. 41st St. (212-391-0805). (I)

World Yacht Dining Cruises
Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown and Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson among others. Jacket required. • Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E)

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Avra
Just as they are uptown at sister restaurant Trata, Fulton Street–fresh whole fish are priced here by the pound and described on the menu the way some restaurants' wine lists like to talk about their wines. *Barbounia*, for example, is a "Mediterranean delicacy that tends to be bony but flavorful." Elsewhere on the menu, spinach pie goes Gallic as spanakopita napoleon and grape leaves get an unexpected stuffing of raw salmon, tuna, and cucumber. • 141 E. 48th St. (212-759-8550). (M–E)

Café Centro
A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. • 200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V

★ Della Femina
It might be easier to score a table here than at the infamous ad man's East Hampton address, but don't read too much into that: the souped-up seasonal American menu tastes just as good in the 212 area code. There's a little country and a little city in his cold corn soup with black truffle coulis, and Dover sole "fish sticks" with a caviar remoulade. And you can almost smell Georgica beach in the lobster roll. • 131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (E)

Divine Bar
This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found unwinding. • 244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). (I–M)

★ Fresco
A family restaurant thriving on Arthur Avenue in the Bronx one can understand. But in midtown? Yet, the Scotto clan strolls around the bustling dining room, cajoling, nudging, hugging, ordering on top of your ordering, as if you'd shown up at their house for leftovers the day after Thanksgiving. For them, Fresco is one big welcome mat. Doesn't matter that the pizza is to die for, the lasagna superb; and if you like liver, you may never want to leave. • 34 E. 52nd St. (212-935-3434). (M–E)

Giambelli 50th Ristorante
Upscale Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. • 46 E. 50th St. (212-688-2760). (M)

★ Kuruma Zushi
Nobu and Bondst might draw celebrity sushi fans, but this is where you'll find the true fanatics, willing to squander their savings on superlatively fresh sushi and sashimi in nondescript surroundings one flight above a midtown side street. Cognoscenti put themselves and their taste buds in the nimble hands of the sushi chef, who amazes with imported treasures like Japanese aji, sea eel, and prawn-Kuruma ebi. • 7 E. 47th St. (212-317-2802). (E)

La Mangeoire
A bit of Provence in midtown. This rustic French country restaurant featuring hearty fare like Mediterranean fish soup with rouille and rabbit fricassé in a mustard tarragon sauce is a boon for a neighborhood otherwise lacking in savoir fare. • 1008 Second Ave., nr. 53rd St. (212-759-7086). (M)

★ Le Cirque 2000
Longtime chef Sottha Khunn has surrendered his whisk to new top toque Pierre Schaedelin, and the tension is palpable: What's the Alsatian recruit have in store for us? Sirio Maccioni rarely makes a mistake when it comes to staffing his world-famous kitchen, and this guy comes with all the right (Michelin-starred) credentials. Let's see what they whip up. • 455 Madison Ave. (212-303-7788). (E)

☆ Le Périgord
A recent renovation did nothing to disguise the comforting, cosseting old-world feel of this Sutton Place landmark, where tuxedo'd captains oversee tableside service and remind you to order your Grand Marnier soufflé at the same time as your dinner. And new chef Jacques Qualin (Jean Georges) is not opposed to bathing veal chops in yogurt-lemon sauce or molding a salmon fillet into the shape of a petite mignon. He's a wizard with lighter dishes as well, like turbot (with a lacy glaze of comte cheese) and a succession of luminous soups. Try the Floating Island for dessert, but be sure to dress in proper attire, or owner Georges Briguet will banish you to the back room. • 405 E. 52nd St. (212-755-6244). (E)

The Leopard
This townhouse restaurant named for the famous Italian novel is known for its bargain four-course prix fixe, including unlimited house wine. The enclosed garden and the French-Continental menu—roast duckling, stuffed quail, filet mignon—attract a loyal following. • 253 E. 50th St. (212-759-3735). (M–E)

Nino's Positano
An upscale Italian restaurant specializing in food from the southern regions, Positano in particular. Pastas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sauce) to the more complex (Cognac-infused seafood risotto), and main courses traverse similar territory. • 890 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M)

★ Oceana
You might call Rick Moonen a conservationist. We call him a tease. He'll serve up dynamite renditions of swordfish and Chilean sea bass, then whisk them off the menu the moment the species nears extinction. But luckily, it's not so much about the raw materials as it is about his unique seasonings and flavor compositions: lobster ravioli in a tomato-basil broth, for instance, with real acid oomph. Or "everything" crusted tuna steak, inspired by the bagel. • 55 E. 54th St. (212-759-5941). (E)

Pig 'n' Whistle on Third
There's plenty of convivial Irish-pub-style cheer in this East Side spinoff of a popular midtown haunt. The basic American menu offers staples like shepherd's pie, barbecued ribs, and onion loaf. Live music Saturday night, and "Irish breakfast" brunch on weekends. • 922 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (212-688-4646). (I–M)

Opening

Duty Calls

"All my old waitresses who live around Smith Street said I had to come," says George Forgeois, owner of Bistro Jules, Café Noir, and Le Singe Vert, all in Manhattan. "No on in the neighborhood had good wine by the glass." That Pinot-deprived plaint might no seem reason enough to infiltrate Brooklyn's increasingly crowded Restaurant Row but to a Frenchman it's a matter of civic pride. Hence **BarTabac**, the outer-borough expansion of Forgeois's mini-French empire. A former mechanic and interior decorato Forgeois (with the help of a local antiques dealer) has contrived an *ambience Parisienne*, incorporating imported tile, a tin ceiling, and props like a foosball table and motor scooter. And to accompany that much-anticipated wine selection, there ar French tapas (Merguez brochettes, duck-confit "cigars"), salads and soups, and bistr staples like steak-frites and cassoulet, all gently priced from $5 to $15.50. (128 Smit Street, at Dean Street; 718-923-0918.)

Photograph by Bruce Kat

Preview

Mr. Zakarian Goes to Town

Even though Geoffrey Zakarian possesses silver-haired matinee-idol good looks, has worked in some of the best restaurants in New York and France including Le Cirque under Daniel Boulud and Alain Sailhac, and received gushing praise as executive chef of 44 and Patroon, the man, by celebrity-chef standards, has yet to become his own brand. No line of food products available at Dean & DeLuca, no fat cookbook contract, not even one cooking show. All that may change March 14 when Zakarian—in his first venture as a chef-owner—brings his bold, brawny cooking style to **Town** at the new David Rockwell-designed Chambers hotel. An intriguing preview menu promises cod "pot roast" with white truffles, fennel, and chestnuts; veal tongue Basque-style; halibut with pork belly and black trumpets; even an updated pastrami sandwich. And who knows? Maybe even a call from the Food Network. (15 West 56th Street; 212-582-4445.)

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne
Maybe you're not an out-of-towner on a spending spree, but you can pretend to be at this posh hotel restaurant overlooking a particularly swank stretch of Fifth Avenue. Chef Oliver Dudler's modern French menu changes seasonally, and incorporates to-be-expected luxury ingredients like lobster (in a trio of soups), foie gras (with red-onion compote), and poached Dover sole. The $50 prix fixe dinner is a (relative) steal. • 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (212-903-3918). (M–E)

★ Beacon
The gimmick here is cooking everything over an open fire: wood-roasted trout, spit-roasted duck with grilled scallions, roast suckling pig with grilled apples and bitter chocolate rub, even oysters. The house-baked breads are exceptional. And in an age of designer martinis and so-so cosmos, the classic cocktail list is precision science. • 25 W. 56th St. (212-332-0500). (E)

Bello
Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking with dinner after 5 P.M. • 863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (212-246-6773). (M)

Bombay Palace
This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent Indian breads. • 30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M)

Da Rosina
A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other Italian fare, like baked polenta marinara and veal scallopine. Try the $19.99 prix fixe dinner. • 342 W. 46th St. (212-977-7373). (M)

Ellen's Stardust Diner
A tribute to that archetype of mid-century American gastronomy, this themey theater-district diner serves up iconic nourishment, from the meat-loaf platter to he "Gina Lola Brigetta" lasagna. • 1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-956-5151). (I–M)

★ JUdson Grill
t's a room so vast and vaulted you expect them to be nnouncing Trailways departures. But chef Bill Telepan's cooking, propelled by a rousing level of confidence in bold flavors and pairings, matches the bravura of the room. With blithe deftness, he makes the familiar seem fresh. Crab cakes get dashed with lemon verbena, chickpea soup tickles insidiously, and loin of pork with apple compote will leave you happy. • 152 W. 52nd St. (212-582-5252). (E)

La Veranda
Northern Italian food. A popular theater district spot offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, and pasta and brunch on weekends. Free parking (with dinner) from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M. • 163 W. 47th St. (212-391-0905). (M)

★ Le Bernardin
Criticizing Le Bernardin is like analyzing rainbows. Just try to describe the snapper in coconut milk or the black bass with truffles and celery root. No matter what you say, you sound like a fool. Submit to the sorcery of chef Eric Ripert, the bewitchery of owner and co-creator Maguy Le Coze, and experience the thrilling sensation of having everything that surrounds you perfect. • 155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E)

★ Local
If your idea of Theater District dining is a lackluster prix fixe, this stylish newcomer and its focused, flavorful cooking will open your eyes—and with entrées venturing into the mid-thirty-dollar range—your wallet. Previously seen stirring the pots for Ron Perelman, chef Franklin Becker has the knack. We're particularly fond of his Vidalia onion and black olive tart, and knockout sea scallops riding a crab cake. • 224 W. 47th St. (212-921-2005). (M–E)

Martini's
Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing sidewalk café and rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. • 810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M)

★ Molyvos
Adorned with photos of Greek island life, ceramics, and folk art, this sprawling midtown taverna is a stylishly rustic showcase for chef Jim Botsacos's serious Mediterranean menu. The window tables up front are ideal for nibbling meze and sipping something from the Greek wine list, but for a true taste of the isles—or the way we'd like to imagine them—go for something gutsier: the melting lamb shanks, clay-pot-baked with orzo and tomato, or "Aglaia's moussaka," unfinishably rich (but still worth the attempt). Desserts offer a few surprises, like the mastic ice cream, a resinous flavor unknown even to Ben and Jerry. • 871 Seventh Ave., nr. 55th St. (212-582-7500). (M)

Palio
Stylish midtown duplex restaurant, with a famous ground-floor muraled bar depicting the Palio race and elegant preparations of Italian dishes like sliced hen pheasant on salad with white truffles, and monkfish ravioli with asparagus and fresh tomato. Jacket required. • 151 W. 51st St. (212-245-4850). (E)

Randolph's
Housed in the Warwick Hotel—which William Randolph Hearst built for his mistress, Marion Davies—this cozy restaurant and lounge has a lush, old-world feel and an eclectic menu of international snacks and entrées, from dim sum to a filet mignon sandwich. • 65 W. 54th St. (212-247-2700). (M–E)

★ Redeye Grill
This place jumps late at night with live jazz, a cacophony of paintings by artists those latter-day Duveens Saatchi and Giuliani have yet to discover, and a fine smoked-fish platter, plus the town's quintessential cobb salad. • 888 Seventh Ave., at 56th St. (212-541-9000). (M–E)

St. Andrews
In what might be New York's only full-fledged Scottish restaurant, the bartenders wear kilts, the scotch is single-malt, and the décor revolves around pictures of famous golf courses. The hearty steak-and-seafood menu features rack of lamb and brook trout stuffed with crabmeat and Irish oatmeal in a scotch-whiskey sauce. • 120 W. 44th St. (212-840-8413). (I–M)

Trattoria dell'Arte
Follow the giant white plaster nose that looms above the entrance to Trattoria dell'Arte like a Route 66 roadside diner icon, for the restaurant's unmatched antipasto bar, crackling pizzas, and consistently reliable kitchen. The Milton Glaser-designed space is a packed power scene at lunch, and a boon for nearby Carnegie Hall concert goers. • 900 Seventh Ave., nr. 56th St. (212-245-9800). (M–E)

'21' Club
You no longer need to wear a necktie at lunch, and chef Erik Blauberg has, gasp, slightly modernized the country-club-classic menu— try the foie gras with black mission figs and pomegranate and the crispy black sea bass with champagne sauce. But the tablecloths at this famous Prohibition-era speakeasy are still red and white, toys still hang from the ceiling, Nixon's wine is still in the vaults, if that gives you a thrill, and, in spite of the lunchtime dress code, the crowd here doesn't have anything against neckties. • 21 W. 52nd St. (212-582-7200). (E)

Utsav Festive India
The bar of this regional Indian restaurant is located at street level while the contemporary dining room is built into a bridge spanning two midtown skyscrapers. The lunch buffet costs only $12.95, and à la carte entrées include ginger rack of lamb, tandoori filet mignon, and Bengali fish paturi. • 1185 Sixth Ave., nr. 46th St. (212-575-2525). (M)

hotograph by Patrik Rytikangas.

Zanzibar
The crowd at this loungy Hell's Kitchen restaurant is as eclectic as the menu. African, Arabic, Asian, and Mediterranean touches appear in dishes like tuna and ginger ravioli; mussel soup with garlic, chickpeas, and cilantro; and a root vegetable and peanut stew served over rice. • 645 Ninth Ave, nr. 45th St. (212-957-9197). (M)

57th–60th Streets

★ Atlas
Each dish has a litany of preparations, and every single impressive yet complicated one of them gets explained to the diner. Chef Paul Liebrandt's food—marinated eels with watermelon, tagliatelle with cepes, and tuna with mini green-apple strudels—exhibits remarkable invention, though some dishes could use more restraint. All the house is missing is the confidence to let its guests sit back and observe Atlas's enjoyable qualities for themselves. • 40 Central Park So. (212-759-9191). (M–E)

★ Guastavino's
They could serve tuna casserole and you'd still be in awe of one of the most spectacular restorations of a neglected urban space. Don't worry. It's ok to drop your jaw at the first sight of the towering Alhambran arches. Everybody does. Though you may not be as impressed with what's put in front of you, Guastavino's is one of those massive undertakings that may take a long time to get things right. In the meantime, enjoy the scenery. • 409 E. 59th St. (212-980-2455). (M–E)

★ Nicole's
Restaurants in clothing stores are usually more amenity than attraction. But this minimalist-chic dining room in the basement of Nicole Farhi's boutique is a rare exception. Chef Annie Wayte is obsessed with seasonal produce, and changes her menu every six weeks to prove it. The less expensive bar menu changes *daily*. Which means one ought not to grow too attached to her grilled-scallop-and-fennel salad, or the fritto misto of wild striped bass, haricots verts, and artichoke hearts. Then again, there's always the delicious incentive of having something new to discover next time. • 10 E. 60th St. (212-223-2288). (E)

Rue 57
The burgundy-and-brass-bistro-by-the-numbers rooms don't lead you to expect much, but chef Sam Hazen has turned what used to be the dreariest corner on 57th Street into a boisterously attractive destination with quirkily superb dishes like mission fig turnovers with Parma Ham and duck crumble. Unlike Pastis, it won't remind you of Paris. But when was the last time you ate this well around the corner from Bergdorf Goodman? • 60 W. 57th St. (212-307-5656). (M)

★ The Russian Tea Room
The late Warner LeRoy left New York this spectacle of a parting gift, and for polishing up the fanciful red and green frippery alone, he deserves our undying gratitude and a Landmarks Preservation Commission award. Whether you love or hate the trout swimming inside the acrylic bear, you can't fault dishes like borscht and Georgian-spiced seared halibut. • 150 W. 57th St. (212-974-2111). (E)

★ San Domenico
You won't find a more elegant big-deal Italian restaurant in New York. We treasure it for the luxurious space at and between tables, the cool coach-leather chairs, the clockwork service, and the refinement of the risottos, pastas, fish, and game. Owner Tony May has an uncompromising passion for the highest quality Italian ingredients and devotedness to classical technique that rivals any Michelin-starred chef, and it shows. • 240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E)

Above 60th Street, East Side

★ Cello
Every appointment (Bernaudaud dishes, monochromatic flowers, and almost reflective mahogany walls) serves as an elegant yet unobtrusive backdrop for the whisper-light delicacies that emerge from chef Laurent Tourondel's kitchen. Rougets glistening like bloodstones in a raw tomato sauce. Turbot that melts like cotton candy. Lamb as velvety as foie gras. And frozen crême bruleé that must have the Häagen-Dazs people turning like dervishes. Cello also has the most beautiful new private dining room in town. • 53 E. 77th St. (212-517-1200). (E)

★ Daniel
Daniel Boulud is blessed with the gift of being able to add familiar flavors into the most stunning of summations, like walnuts and foie gras that intensify the lush gaminess of quail. He routinely triumphs in why-didn't-anyone-else-think-of-it feats like finding what envelopes sweetbreads to leave you without that heady aftertaste—suspending them between a rhubarb glaze and spinach purée. And his chocolate bombe soars like no other. • 60 E. 65th St. (212-288-0033). (E)

★ Eli's Restaurant
It's downright soothing to wander into Eli's Restaurant, spruced up and downlit for dinner, and relax over Scott Bieber's straightaway cooking. His Nantucket bay scallops in butter come from an era before we ever dreamed of eating seaweed. We're not sure why several slices of Molino tomatoes, even glistening with Laudemio olive oil and fleur de sel, should cost $8 but hey, this is Eli Zabar, the man who taught us no price is too much for the perfect raspberry. • 1411 Third Ave., at 80th St. (212-717-8100). (E)

Etou
"Fusion is indefeasible" reads the motto printed on the menu of this Upper East Side Japanese restaurant from the owners of Flushing's Tawainese-Chinese-Japanese fusion joint, Laifood. To support their thesis, the kitchen dabbles in Thai spices, Mexican chiles, even mozzarella cheese to jazz up otherwise traditionally prepared Japanese dishes. • 1420 Third Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-249-0738). (M)

★ Lobster Club
If you name your restaurant after a sandwich, like Anne Rosenzweig did, it better be good. Her lobster club on brioche is better than that, but it's not what keeps us coming back. The menu, like its creator, is whimsical, provocative and amusing, and we can't get enough of her garlicky Provençal fries, her meatloaf of the day, and her designer matzoh brie with smoked salmon and dill. • 24 E. 80th St (212-249-6500). (M–E)

Mark's
Decked out like a private London club, with plump, tasseled pillows to nestle against. Fine French-American cooking (torchon of foie gras with cranberry-kumquat compote, pan-roasted lobster with Armagnac jus), award-winning wine list, and a Willy Wonka–worthy chocolate tea. • 25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (212-879-1864). (E)

Nino's
Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. • 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E)

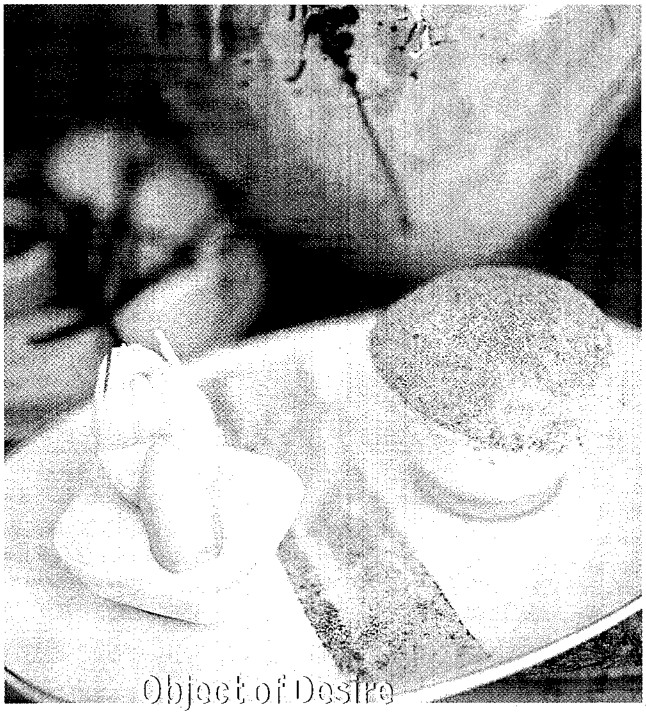
★ Payard Patisserie & Bistro
You'll never shiver and blush the way Francois Payard's Nôtre Dame, Fontainbleau, St.-Honoré, or devilish chocolate tart make you when they hijack your taste buds to a place they've never been and will forever yearn to return. If all this sweetness weren't enough, Payard's chef Philippe Bertineau concocts first and second courses that match François's touted thirds. • 1032 Lexington Ave. (212-717-5252). (M–E)

Sel & Poivre
Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. • 853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M)

Trata
With its fish-market display, its Greek spreads and salads, and its simply grilled seafood, this bustling Upper East Side restaurant offers an affordable, less dramatic alternative to Estiatorio Milos, where the chef used to work. • 1331 Second Ave., nr. 70th St. (212-535-3800). (M)

Above 60th Street, West Side

★ Jean Georges
Are you ready for an amazing evening that is not about you? Nothing and no one at Jean Georges steals center stage from the wondrous creations of its extraordinary chef, Jean-Georges Vongerichten. If you're okay with such divine supplication, prepare to be open-mouthec



Object of Desire

A Citrus in Every Pot

Who says potpie has to be chicken? Not **Picholine** pastry chef Deborah Racicot, whose contribution to the comfort-food pantheon features tapioca pearls cooked in the combined juices of lemon, blood orange, and grapefruit, mixed with fruit segments, candied kumquats, Meyer lemon, poached vanilla beans, and tarragon, all steamily encased beneath a puff-pastry lid And the accompanying fennel panna cotta is less a garnish than a creamy, cool counterpoint jauntily adorned with a nearly transparent fennel chip. (35 West 64th Street; 212-724-8585.

Photograph by Kenneth Chen

whenever you're not chewing. Nothing you encounter will fail to dazzle, from the simplest dish of asparagus and morels au jus to the unexpected combo of sweetbreads en cocotte with ginger and licorice. • 1 Central Park West (212-299-3900). (E)

★ Picholine
Terrance Brennan doesn't want to be the Upper West Side's best chef. He's got the whole city in his sights, which explains why his French-Mediterranean menu aspires to such lofty heights. Rustic nightly specials like cassoulet and seven-hour lamb shank are earthy counterpoint to menu selections like sea-urchin panna cotta and truffle-steeped poached halibut. The wild-mushroom-and-duck risotto has its own fan club, as does fromager Max McCalman, a true cheese whiz. • 35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E)

River
The *faux*-tropical atmosphere provides a serene, bamboo-bolstered background for the familiar assortment of Vietnamese and Thai dishes. Standouts include chicken satay; pad Thai; spicy coconut chicken soup; and marinated beef with garlic, ginger, and plum sauce. • 345 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 76th St. (212-579-1888). (M)

★ Ruby Foo's
In what might be Auntie Mame's duplex during her high mah-jongg period, the black-bean sauce is vibrant and the wok steamed lobster is worth its weight in jade. And regardless of where you sit, you have to walk down the Mamescent staircase at least once. Screaming "Live! Live! Live!" is optional. • 2182 Broadway, at 77th St. (212-724-6700). (M)

Sapphire Indian Cuisine
A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. • 1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M)

Brooklyn

Monte's
This Italian dining room is truly a Brooklyn landmark, with its Venetian crystal chandelier, restored oak-and-mahogany bar, and Venetian murals from 1938. The kitchen is equally renowned for its famous shrimp à la Monte and homemade cheesecake. • 451 Carroll St. (718-624-8984). (M)

★ Peter Luger
Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own Peter Luger credit card, or bring cash. • 178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($)

Queens

Water's Edge
Every table has a view of Manhattan. A quiet and elegant space to partake of fancy American fare like roasted-chestnut soup and red snapper poached in orange-saffron infusion with baby fennel and chervil. Jacket required. • 44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E)

Westchester

Equus
No ordinary hotel restaurant, this one is housed within a hundred-year-old castle called, appropriately enough, the Castle at Tarrytown, a Re-ais & Châteaux property with Hudson River views. Dinner is a $58 prix fixe, and offers such ontemporary French fare as terrine of foie gras with Calvados, pan-roasted wild striped bass with corn ravioli, and medallions of venison with red cabbage and root- vegetable cakes. acket required. • 400 Benedict Ave. (914-631-980). (E)

BERMAN *Continued from page 61*

took her house and she had to declare bankruptcy. Friends say the couple came undone by a project they tried to do together—a Broadway musical based on the Dreyfus affair. To finance it, they used Susan's assets. The musical never got off the ground. The relationship failed. Susan had another breakdown.

But Mella and Sareb would continue to be her children. "Being a mother to these kids was one of the proudest and most satisfying things in her life," says Rich Markey. In 1992, a friend gave Susan, now penniless, use of a condo on Sunset Boulevard. While Sareb stayed with his father, Susan and Mella lived there for five years for free, and Susan started writing mysteries to pay her expenses and Mella's private-school tuition. She and Mella also co-wrote an unpublished book manuscript, titled *Never a Mother, Never a Daughter*. Susan always wanted children of her own; at one point, she talked with her friends about asking Bobby Durst to father a child with her.

The biggest thing to come out of that period was Susan's return to Las Vegas: A book and an A&E special called *Lady Las Vegas* brought her new acclaim and fresh cash (and showed, perhaps, a lack of caution, since she'd once told Julie Smith that, after *Easy Street*, she'd been warned, *Don't ever mess with us again*). Finally back on her feet, she called Dee Schiffer and asked if she could move back to the house on Benedict Canyon Road.

By then she had also acquired a manager, Nyle Brenner, whom she'd met walking her dogs on Sunset. It would prove to be a strange and intense relationship. Susan was the only writer Brenner represented; the rest were primarily struggling actors. It was lost on no one that Nyle was a ringer for Mister Margulies. Friends say Susan would call him constantly to help deal with her now-raging phobias. He ferried her around to do her shopping and to her doctors' appointments (Susan always had a litany of medical worries) and to the vet (the dogs did, too). When he'd get fed up, she'd tell him, "Fine, leave." At which point, according to her friends, Brenner would grovel and beg her to keep him. He later told one of Susan's girlfriends that "she was like an addiction." So was he.

Though Susan's friends believe Nyle lacks any particular interest in women, she was determined "to get him in bed, she was so in love with this guy." Her obsession led to several painful and humiliating experiences, but she couldn't let it go.

By the end of Susan's life, many of her friends believed the relationship had gotten even more volatile. Markey, who gave Susan an old couch a few weeks before she died (she could never afford furniture), recalls that when she asked Nyle to fetch it, "I could see on his face, the last thing in the world he wanted to do was to haul a couch down a staircase for Susan. But he did it." Others say that in her last few days, she was upset about an incident that had happened recently. Susan had surgery on her eyes for glaucoma, which to her "was like open-heart surgery," says a friend. Nyle was in charge of taking her for the procedure and "making sure that she didn't fall on the way home." Of course, she did fall.

ON DECEMBER 22ND, SUSAN'S last night alive, she went to dinner and a movie with Rich Markey. Using their Writers Guild passes, they went to see *Best in Show*, the dog-show comedy, and Susan laughed uproariously through it. Over dinner, after Susan did her usual grilling of the waiter, they talked about her book deal, her TV deal, Sareb and Mella. Susan was particularly excited about a sequel she was planning to *Easy Street*, called *Rich Girl Broke*. Markey was on his way to Vegas for a family reunion and Susan was delighted that he would see where she grew up. On the way home, she had a fit in the parking garage because someone in the elevator pressed *5*. It was a normal Susan evening.

The police believe that she was killed the next morning, Saturday the 23rd. When they arrived on Sunday, her mail hadn't been brought in yet, though Susan (and the dogs) never missed the mailman. Word first got out when Susan's cousin Deni Marcus called and a homicide detective answered the phone.

The person who would have been notified first was Sareb, who lived nearby and talked to her daily. But he was traveling in Amsterdam; it seemed as if everyone was away. When Susan didn't call him on Christmas Eve—a night they always spent together—and didn't return his calls, he feared something horrible had happened. "Even if she was laid up in the hospital," Sareb said, "she would have called me." In the last year, she and Mella had become estranged. It bothered Susan terribly, and she worried endlessly about Mella. At the same time, she had rewritten her will and cut her out. Not that there was much left, besides mementos and the rights to her work—though they may well have grown in value since her death. She left the rights to at least one of her works to Nyle Brenner.

It wasn't until the following night that word began to spread to Susan's close circle. She was ex-

(continued on page 114)

cue

Nightlife

Edited by Ethan Brown

Concerts

Kodo Drummers
3/9 at 8. • New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Newark, N.J. (888-GO-NJPAC). $12-$48.

OutKast; Ludacris
3/9 at 8. • The Theater at Madison Square Garden, 34th St. and Seventh Ave. (212-307-7171). Sold out.

"Smart Sounds: Music for the Planets": A Concert to Benefit the Rainforest Alliance
3/6 at 8: With BR-549, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, Levon Helm, Dr. John, Keb' Mo', Kim Wilson. • Beacon Theatre, 74th St. and Broadway (212-307-7171). $45.

Small Stages

Arlene Grocery
3/6: Pile of Heads; Lucky Town. 3/7: Prime 8; Matt Whyte; Indy. 3/8: Shogun; The Mudhens' Kaz Silver. 3/9: Ambulance; Fagen'Went. 3/10: Candymeat; Man Planet. 3/11: Today; Jel; Soulfarm. 3/12: Sidney; Punk Metal Karaoke; Virgin 3.0. 3/13: Watercress; Swati; Liz Skellman. • 95 Stanton St. (212-358-1633). $.

B.B. King Blues Club & Grill
Fridays and Saturdays: Free late-night blues sessions in Lucille's restaurant. Sundays: KISS-FM Gospel Brunch. 3/6–3/7: Johnny Winter. 3/8–3/10: Koko Taylor and Her Blues Machine. 3/13: Van Zant. • 243 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144).

Bottom Line
3/6: Jefferson Starship. 3/9: Dave Van Ronke; Judy Henske. 3/10: Jackie DeShannon. 3/12: "The Music of Frank Zappa" performed by the Ed Palermo Big Band. • 15 W. 4th St. (212-228-6300).

Bowery Ballroom
3/7: Matthew Good Band. 3/8: The Nields; Eddie From Ohio. 3/10–3/11: The Donnas. • 6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).

Fez
Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. 3/6: Rob Nash; Greg Walloch. 3/9: Math & Science. 3/11: Ari Gold. • Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).

Irving Plaza
3/9: Karl Denson's Tiny Universe; Olu Dara; Melvin Sparkle. 3/12: Sepultura; Hatebreed; Flybanger. • 17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).

Joe's Pub
An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. Mondays: "Downtown Rock and Roll" with ever-present spinner Paul Sevigny. Tuesdays: Hip-hop and R&B with D.J. Rich Medina at "One." Wednesdays: The deep-house-oriented "Love Bazaar" with D.J. MKL. Thursdays: "Benefit," a downtown music revue. Fridays: Editors, scene-makers, and boldface names take their turns spinning their favorite records with the "Personality D.J. Series." Saturdays: "Hideaway" with Kiki and Unik. Sundays: "Club Badd" with long-lost downtown icon Larry Tee. 3/10: "Sista Factory" with Lonnie Gordon. 3/11: "Urban Griots" with Rha Goddess and Willie Perdomo. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Knitting Factory
3/6: Mike Ladd; Sonic Sum; Chris Kelsey Quartet; Mr. Wau Wau; Pat Donaher. 3/7: "Ground Control All-Stars" with Acelayone, Rasco, Ed OG, The Masterminds. 3/8: Jaron Lanier; Will Calhoun Duo. 3/9: Tim Berne's Quicksand. 3/10: Blake Babies; Starlight Mints. 3/11: Either/Orchestra; Projekt Magiczne Karpaty. 3/12: Steve Turre. 3/13: Antony & The Johnsons Orchestra; Saul Williams. • 74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.

Makor
3/8: Purim Blowout Party: D.J. Peretz (Perry Farrell) & Mishpucha D.J.'s. 3/10: NRBQ. 3/11: Cynthia Sayer Trio. 3/11: Open Jam. 3/13: Songwriters Hall of Fame. • 35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000).

Maxwell's
3/8: Project Object. 3/9: The Swingin' Neckbreakers; The Woggles. 3/9: Melissa Ferrick. • 1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).

Mercury Lounge
3/8: Rocket From the Crypt. 3/9: The Prodigals. • 217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).

Rodeo Bar
3/6: Dave Foley Band. 3/7: Bucktooth Johnson. 3/8: Cropduster. 3/9: The Niagras. 3/10: Hi Geared Combo. 3/11: The Yallopin Hounds. 3/12: Western Caravan. 3/13: Bruce Smith. • 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500).

Ground Rules

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

S.O.B.'s
3/6: Xzibit. 3/7: Anje's Bitches Brew. 3/9: Mizik Mizik. 3/10: Ogans. 3/12: "La Tropica Mondays." 3/13: Mobb Deep featuring Prodigy. • 204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).

The Village Underground
Former Tramps booker Steve Weitzman brings his eclectic sensibility to a new smoke-free club in the West Village. 3/7–3/9: Michelle Shocked. 3/10: Mer; Queen Esther; Stella Starr; Sadie. • 130 W. 3rd St. (212-777-7745).

Wetlands
Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 3/8: The Ominous Seapods; Agents of Good Roots; The Fuzzy Sprouts. 3/10: Max Creek. • 161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600). $.

Clubs

"Love Affair"
John Davis's new Thursday-night party with D.J.'s MKL and Jerome Syndenham is full of all the flutey deep house you've come to expect from the promoter who built the "Body & Soul" empire. Thankfully, this plush way-west space is a nice departure from Vinyl's dingy dance floor. • 431 W. 16th St., bet. Ninth and Tenth Aves. (212-714-7116 or www.jdproductionsnyc.com). $12; ladies free before midnight.

Centro-Fly
Once dominated by the bottle-service set, Centro-Fly has now achieved a near-perfect mix of Wall Streeters with loosened ties, D.J.-bag-carrying dance-music fanatics, and track-suited deep-house heads. Tuesdays: Promoter Noah Tepperberg's fabulous "TuesdayBaby-Tuesday" goes head-to-head with Spa's model-centric Tuesday party. Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Morillo and big-name special guests. Fridays: "GBH" ("Great British House"), a refugee from Cheetah, makes a bid for the big room of Centro-Fly. Saturdays: Energetic house and big beat with "Plant." • 45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).

Cheetah
A jungle-themed club with a spaciou dance floor and a small yet powerfu sound system. Thursdays: A super-exclusive (invite only, they say), hyperstealth party thrown by promoters Allen Wes and Samuel "Tone" Barnes. D.J. Kaor spins. Fridays: "The World House Project" with D.J. Anthony Macaroni. Saturdays: Thumping tribal house and live percussionists at "Cherchez La Femme." Sundays: "Boy Nite" D.J. Merritt spins at "Mardi Gras." • 12 W. 21st St (212-206-7770).

Fun
This sprawling, bi-level, warehouselike space doesn book big-name D.J. talent, but it's got one of th coolest interiors in clubland, with huge projection of Japanese *anime,* a vertiginous yet comfy balcon area, and a seemingly gravity-defying D.J. booth. Bes of all, Fun recently snagged the cyberfetish part "Click +Drag" from the now-defunct Mother. • 13

Performance

Daring Dara

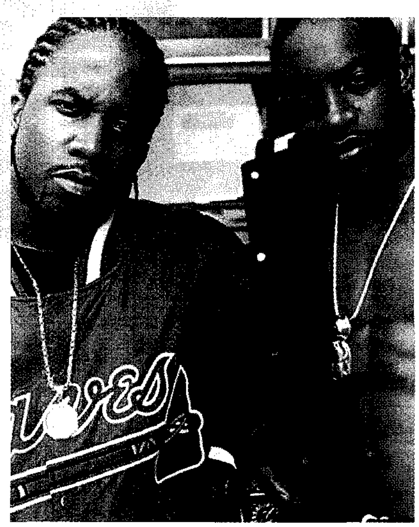
He's worked with everyone from avant-jazz hornplayer David Murray to fusionist extraordinaire Bill Laswell, but **Olu Dara** (pictured) didn't release his first solo album, *In the World: From Natchez to New York,* until 1998. No matter: The singer-songwriter and trumpeter—whose influences run from Fela Kuti-style Afro-funk to the searing, organ-centric New Orleans fusion of Dr. John—is one of the more daring figures in contemporary jazz. Dara will bring that cross-genre sound to Irving Plaza March 9 and March 10, when he opens for the equally eclectic Karl Denson. (See "Small Stages.")

Photograph by Anthony Barboz

Doubleheader

Insane in the Membrane

On last year's "What's Your Fantasy," Atlanta rapper **Ludacris** (pictured above) made a booty call sound off-the-wall: "What's your *fan-ta-ta-sy!!!*" he practically squealed. On his latest single, "Southern Hospitality," he rhymes about life on the Southern skids ("hand-me-down flip-flops") over thundering timpani and what sounds like a motorcycle peeling off into oblivion. And since Ludacris (whose real name is Chris Bridges) is one of hip-hop's most out-there new stars, nearly every M.C. on the planet is trying to lure him into the studio. "Let's see, I got collaborations coming with LL Cool J, Method Man, Missy Elliott, and Ginuwine," he says. "Oh, and I got something in the works with Shaquille O'Neal, too." But before he can go off rapping with NBA superstars, there's a national tour with that other rap act of the moment, **OutKast** (pictured), which comes to the Theater at Madison Square Garden March 9. "They're really the first group to put the South on the map, so I'm happy to be out there with them," he says. And then, paraphrasing OutKast's memorable motto of Atlanta fly life, he adds: "We're gonna school the world about what the southern playalistic pimp shit is all about." E.B.



Madison St., under the Manhattan Bridge (212-964-303). $5.

The Roxy
Fridays, the Roxy enlists D.J. Jason Ojeda for the re-unch of its night for the weekender straight crowd. aturdays: Superstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house r the Chelsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys ance on the bar. • 515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.

hine
This downtown spot is now host to excellent, enthu-astically received D.J.-oriented nights as well as up-nd-coming rock and dance acts. Thursdays: the glori-usly great D.J. Ron Trent and special guests like Phil sher and Norman Jay. Fridays: The hip-hop-and-ouse-oriented "Fri-Daze." Saturdays: D.J. Greg oole's dance-centric "Tremendous." • 285 W. Broad-ay (212-941-0900).

PA
he health-and-wellness theme (white walls, bath-ooms designed to look like saunas) is thankfully ostly unobtrusive, and the crowd is thankfully not cessively chic. Spa promoter Steven Lewis main-ins the kind of balance between office *zhlubs*, club ds, and A-listers he pulled off so nicely in the early ys of the now-defunct Life. Wednesdays: "Big Bad odgy Disco," with New Wave and rock spun by D.J. Paul Sevigny. Thursdays: Super-promoter Erich Conrad's "Glam," with D.J. Jackie Christie. Fridays: Marc Ronson and Grandmaster Flash spin hip-hop and R&B for the A-listers at "Hollywood 2000." • 76 E. 13th St. (212-388-1060).

Twilo
Never mind all the drug-bust drama: The real news here is that Twilo is leaving trance in the dust and fast becoming a progressive-house fan's wet dream thanks to sets from U.K. epic housers like Mauro Piccotto and Danny Howells. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno with "2K Wednesdays," a low-key alternative to the frenzied Friday nights. Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. 3/9: Dave Ralph. 3/10: Anthony Pappa; Sean Cusick. • 530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).

Vinyl
The recent quality-of-life crackdowns have taken a toll on the club's once extraordinarily open vibe, but the parties—"Shelter" and "Body & Soul" in particular—continue to be strong. Fridays: Hard, trippy house from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now-legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early (before seven) or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. • 6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).

Jazz

"Jazz at Lincoln Center" Presents "Duets on the Hudson"
3/9–3/10 at 8: With Stefon Harris, Jacky Terrasson, Hamiet Bluiett, and D. D. Jackson. • Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St. (212-721-6500); $45.

"Jazz at Noon"
Lunchtime jam sessions every Friday at the San Martin Restaurant with some of jazz's hottest players. 3/5: Bob Kindred. 3/9: Randy Sandke. • 143 E. 49th St. (212-832-0888 or www.jazzatnoon.com).

"Jazz Insights Presents: The Music of Duke Ellington"
Informal lectures hosted by Arnold Jay Smith. All lectures being at 7:45. 3/6: Nat Hentoff. • 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5690); $35.

Birdland
Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: from 5:30 to 7:30 P.M., David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band. Tuesdays: The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra. 3/7–3/8: Patato 'Ritmo y Candela. 3/9–3/10: Coltrane Revisited. • 315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).

Blue Note
With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 3/6–3/11: "Latin Masters Week 2" with Herbie Mann's Sona Terra Band; Dave Valentin Quartet. • 131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).

Cajun
A brassy and brightly lit bit of New Orleans in Chelsea, dedicated to Preservation Hall–style Dixieland. Regulars include Joe Muranyi, clarinetist for the last six years of Louis Armstrong's All Stars; Eddy Davis, a jazz banjoist; and Chuck Folds, a stride pianist and sometime accompanist to trumpet legend Doc Cheatham. • 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (212-691-6174).

City Hall
Fridays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. • 131 Duane St. (212-227-7777).

Detour
With no cover and top-notch young players, this Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. Sundays: Mike Magilligan. • 349 E. 13th St. (212-533-6212).

Iridium
In the surreal basement across from Lincoln Center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. Sets Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 3/6–3/11: David Murray Octet. • 44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).

The Jazz Standard
A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10; Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight; and Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 3/6–3/11: Eliane Elias Trio. • 116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).

Red Blazer
Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz Band. Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenhall's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie & Swing Band. • 32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).

otographs by Jonathan Mannion.

Rose Center
3/9: Vanessa Rubin Quartet. The Rose Center is open until 8:45 p.m. Fridays; suggested admission price is $10 for adults, $7.50 for students and seniors, $6 for children. • American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St. (212) 769-5100.

Showman's Café
Reopened right on 125th Street (though not, unfortunately, in its original location adjacent to the Apollo), the legendary jazz watering hole offers slow-cooked soul-jazz and funkified hard bop every night. No cover; two-drink minimum. • 375 E. 125th St. (212-864-8941); $.

Small's
Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. • 183 W. 10th St (212-929-7565).

Sweet Basil
An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. • 88 Seventh Ave. So. (212-242-1785).

Tonic
Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. 3/6: Frances Marie Uitti, Charles K. Noyes & Elliott Sharp. 3/7: Elliott Sharp meets White Out; Christian Marclay, Ikue Mori & Elliott Sharp. 3/8: I-Sound & Apestaartje. 3/9: Mat Maneri Quintet; Marc Ribot; Steven Bernstein's Millenial Territory Orchestra. 3/10: Leroy Jenkins' Gut Band; Anthony Coleman's Conversos; Calla. 3/13: Ned Rothenberg, Mark Dresser & Susie Ibarra. • 107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503); $.

Village Vanguard
Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 3/6–3/11: Russell Malone Quartet. • 178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037); $.

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club
Animal House ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Shows Tues.–Thurs. at 9:30; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and midnight. • 82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).

Carolines On Broadway
In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum. • 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100).

Comedy Cellar
A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 3/12: Colin Quinn; Dave Attell; Nick DiPaolo; Gregg Rogell; Greg Giraldo; Godfrey. • 117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).

Comic Strip
Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. • 1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).

Dangerfield's
Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. • 1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).

Gotham
A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun.: New Talent Showcase; Wednesdays with Robert Klein. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 with a $10 cover; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 with a $15 cover; two-drink minimum. 3/7: Robert Klein. 3/9–3/10: Adam Ferrera; Sklar Bros; Rob Magnotti; Pete Correale; Greg Carey. • 34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).

"Spin Cycle Comedy"
Comedy from Danny Cohen and Jodie Wasserman while you separate your whites and colors. Really. • King Size Laundromat, 178 Seventh Ave., at 20th St. (212-501-6016); free.

Stand-up New York
Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 a.m. $12 cover. 3/9–3/10: Jason and Randy Brothers; Vanessa Hollingshead; Adam Ferrara. • 236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel
The Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.) 3/13–3/17: Jane Monheit. • 59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).

Arci's Place
A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. Through 3/24: Buddy Greco. • 450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).

Cafe Carlyle
Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. $60. Through 3/17: Mary Cleere Haran in "Sweet & Low Down." • Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).

Cafe Pierre
Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis celebrates her fourteenth year at the Cafe Pierre with a special program called "Fascinating Rhythms: 50 Years o American Popular Song and Jazz." Sun.–Mon., Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 minimum; jacket and tie required. • Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-940-8195)

The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books
Fridays and Saturdays at 9:30 and 11:00: Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubin' eleven-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum. • 156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).

Don't Tell Mama
What better way to wind down after an evening o overwrought Broadway fare than some understate cabaret? Thursdays: "Seth's Broadway Chatterbox." Fridays: "The Next Big Broadway Musical." Saturday at 8: "Poole Party!" Saturdays at 11: Tommy Femi presents "Judy Garland Live!" • 343 W. 46th St. (212 757-0788); $.

Feinstein's at the Regency
Michael Feinstein's cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Park. Tickets are $50 Tues.–Fri.; $75 for the early show on Friday and all shows on Saturday; $50 food-and-drin minimum. 3/6–3/10: Patti Paige in "The Paige o Time." • 540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 21 339-4095).

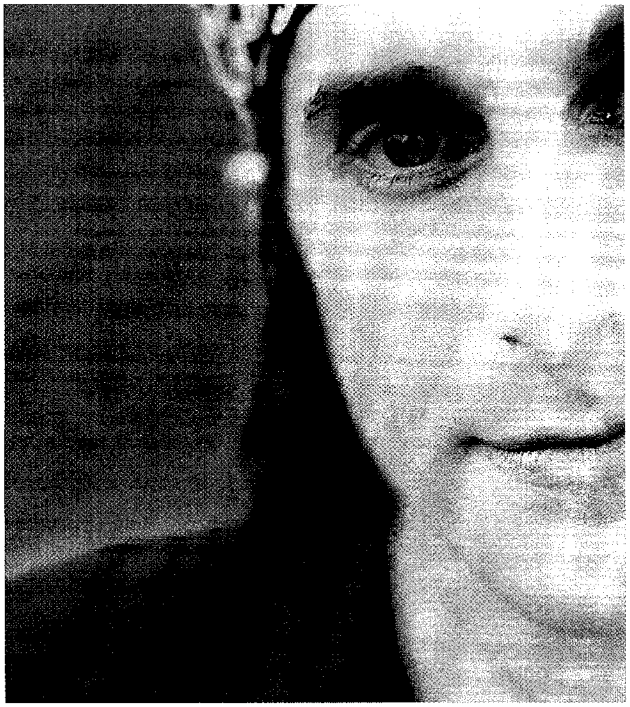
FireBird Café
The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, righ next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen an you'll be fine. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 9; Fri.–Sat. at 9 an 11. $30 cover; $15 minimum. 3/9–3/24: Baby Ja Dexter in "Making Every Moment Count." • 365 46th St. (212-586-0244).

Judy's
This cozy and friendly piano bar features two perfo mance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Ju herself. 3/6: Ron Ramsay in "Go With Me." 3/ Nancy Marano. 3/9: Audrey Lavine. 3/10: Judy Kr ston and David Lahm. 3/11: Aaron Lee Battle in "St Right Up." 3/12: "That's My New York." 3/13: R Ramsay in "Go With Me." • 169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18 and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).

Performance

Hamantaschen for Hipsters

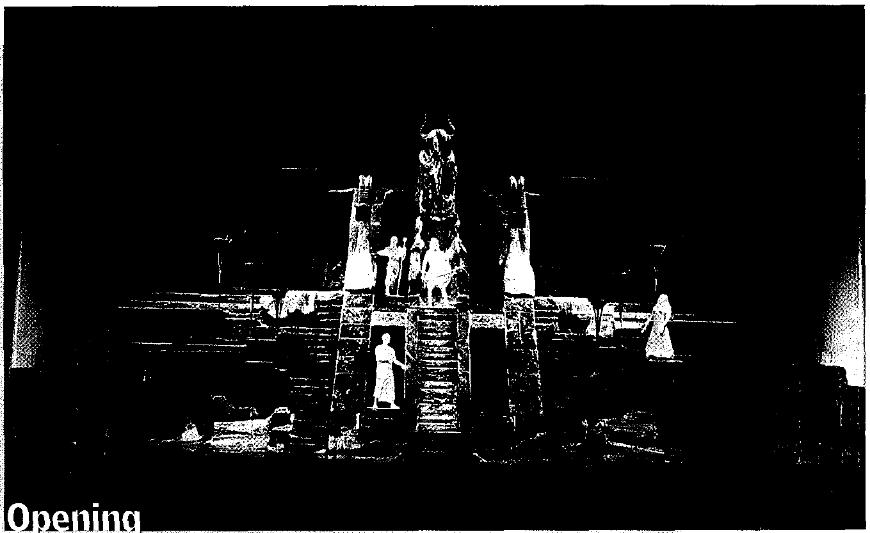
Madonna and Michael Jackson may play around with the cabala, but only former Jane's Addiction singer **Perry Farrell** (pictured) keeps it real—he's actually Jewish. So after exploring punk and piercing, he's going back to his roots, D.J.-ing clubs and raves under the name "D.J. Peretz." Since he's always loved dressing up, it's only fitting that he'll take over the turntables at the Jewish cultural center Makor for its Purim blowout. Really. (See "Small Stages.")



Photograph by Ralf Strathm

Classical & Dance

Edited by Alicia Zuckerman



Opening

Faith-Based Opera

With so much talk of religion in the public forum, what better time for the comeback of Verdi's biblical epic? The last time **Nabucco** was performed at the Metropolitan Opera, JFK was in the White House and separation of church and state was still considered a good thing. The story is about the idol-worshiping King Nebuchadnezzar and his persecution of the Jews in Babylon, but director Elijah Moshinsky insists it's not a lesson in monotheism and oppression. "Everyone tries to give it a Holocaust reference," he says. But in fact the story is an allegory for Italian nationalism—*Nabucco* premiered in 1842, during the occupation of Italy, and the "Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves" ("Va Pensiero") became a kind of anthem—and "once you take away the historical context, the meaning is lost." It's rarely performed, says Moshinsky, because the vocal parts are "fiendishly difficult," especially for the soprano. (The role of Abigaille, one of Nabucco's daughters, was originally written for Verdi's second wife, Giuseppina Strepponi.) Moshinsky notes that when Elena Suliotis sang Abigaille, it contributed to the ruin of her short career. In the new Met production, Maria Guleghina takes up the challenge. "She's *it*," says Moshinsky, predicting that it will become her signature role. And even though Met stagings are known for their grandeur, Moshinsky, who has directed all over the world for 26 years, says of this ziggurated Babylon, "It's the biggest set I've ever seen." (The designer is John Napier, who did *Les Misérables* and *Cats*; his scale model is pictured.) Besides, adds Moshinsky, the great tunes and mixture of kitsch and profundity are keys to operatic success. "You're entertained during a whole series of horrible events," he says. And *that* may be the very definition of great opera. ALICIA ZUCKERMAN

Classical Music

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Daniel Barenboim conducts and performs Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 26. 3/8 at 8. Mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli joins the symphony for Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'Été*. 3/9 at 8. The New York premiere of Augusta Read Thomas's *Aurora* is 3/10 at 8. Also on the programs are works by Bruckner and Stravinsky. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $33–$151.

The New York Philharmonic
Presents Elgar's 1900 oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius*, led by principal guest conductor Sir Colin Davis nd featuring the Westminster Symphonic Choir. /8 and 3/10 at 8, 3/9 at 2. Lecture by former *New Yorker* critic Andrew Porter precedes concerts by one hour. Open rehearsal 3/8 at 9:45 A.M.; $12. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $19–$80.

Antigoni Goni
A classical-guitar recital featuring the world premiere of Sergio Assad's *Three Greek Letters* and the U.S. premiere of Stanley Silverman's *". . . Eridos" (Greek Myth)*. 3/10 at 8:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $10–$20.

Adamant Music School
Piano-philes can get their fill when eight faculty and alumni of the Vermont school's "total piano" program perform works by Debussy, Ravel, and Brahms, including *Hungarian Dances for Four Hands*. 3/11 at 2:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $10.

Chanticleer
Grammy-award-winning singers are joined by Frederica von Stade in a concert featuring Heggie's *Anna Madrigal Remembers*, with lyrics adapted from Armistead Maupin's book *Tales of the City*, and works by Mahler and Sondheim. 3/11 at 7. • Temple of Dendur, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-570-3949); $50.

The Met Orchestra
James Levine conducts Mahler's Symphony No. 9. 3/11 at 3. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $33–$141.

Opera

The Metropolitan Opera
Production premiere of *Nabucco* opens 3/8. Also playing this week are *Die Zaubflöte, Così Fan Tutte*, and *La Bohème*. Call for program details and times, or visit www.metopera.org. • Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); $25–$250.

New York City Opera
Has its season premiere of *La Bohème* on 3/10. Also onstage: *Tosca* and *Rigoletto*. Call for program details and times, or visit www.nycopera.com. • New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-870-5570); $25–$98.

Dance

The Paul Taylor Dance Company
Premieres two new works in its City Center Season, *Fiends Angelical* and *Dandelion Wine*. 3/6–3/11, times vary. • City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212); $25–$55.

Mark Morris Dance Group
Celebrates its twentieth season with sixteen dances, five programs, and two New York premieres: *Four Saints in Three Acts* and *Sang-Froid*. 3/6–3/25, times vary. Visit www.bam.org for details. • Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718-636-4100); $20–$50.

Morgan Scott Ballet
Presents two world premieres: *Strayhorn Suite*, a tribute to jazz legend Billy Strayhorn, and *You Are My Friend*, a rock-gospel solo. The company will also perform *Nocturne* with music from Chopin's *Nocturnes* and *Stockhausen: 2000*. 3/6, 3/8–3/11, times and program details vary. • St. Mark's Church, Second Ave. and 10th St. (212-674-8194); $15–$20.

Donald Byrd/The Group
Premieres *HeavyLight* with music by Steve Mackey, performed live by MOSAIC, and *Utopia* with music by John Adams. 3/7–3/11, times and program details vary. • Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (212-864-5400); $18–$28.

Neil Greenberg
Presents the premiere of his *Construction With Varied Materials*, a combination of new and revisited material, including a solo he choreographed for Baryshnikov and improvisations set to Ray Charles–Betty Carter duets. 3/7–3/10 at 8. • The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793); $18.

Whirling Dervishes of Damascus
Are in town from Syria for a concert of sacred Muslim dance and Sufi music by the Al-Kindi Ensemble. 3/11 at 7. • The Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. (212-545-7536); $15–$25.

Ground Rules

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

hotograph courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera.

cue

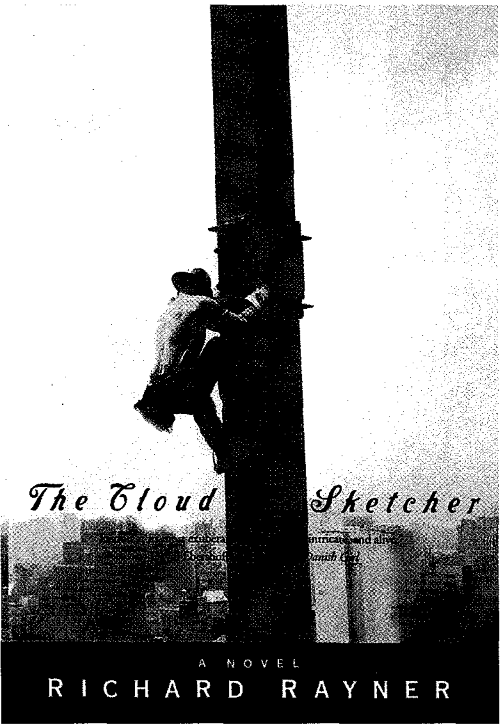
TheMix

Edited by Boris Kachka

In Print

Onward and Upward

"You can't go far in this territory without encountering the long shadow of *The Fountainhead,*" says **Richard Rayner**, who takes his own stab at architectural fiction with *The Cloud Sketcher, about an equally idealistic but far more adaptable young visionary.* "Frank Lloyd Wright lied to get commissions. And Alvar Aalto—he was certainly a scoundrel." This may be a painstakingly researched historical novel, shifting halfway through from the little-known Finnish Civil War to tried-and-true Roaring Twenties New York, but it owes a good deal to his own experiences. Those were well-documented in his first novel, *Los Angeles Without a Map* (about a Brit who, like Rayner, follows a *Playboy* Bunny to Los Angeles) and his 1995 memoir, *The Blue Suit* (about his double life as a Cambridge undergrad, burglarizing homes on the side). *The Cloud Sketcher*'s Esko Vaananen, loosely based on Eliel Saarinen, comes to the States chasing an old flame, a Russian aristocrat who fled the revolution, and fulfills his life's ambition—to build a skyscraper—only by cozying up to a gangster. It's Rayner's first look at New York, where he lived for a year. "I really much prefer it to L.A. But I got this job, and the kids came along. We sort of got stuck here." As for *The Cloud Sketcher*'s bleak Scandinavian scenes, Rayner, whose wife is from Finland, found the place sobering. "I knew that once I started looking at the Finnish material, it was going to be, for good or ill, a romantic epic," says Rayner. "This very obviously isn't a snob-value literary novel, but it's also not a straightforward pulp romance. I don't have a reader in mind other than the reader I am." Rayner reads on March 13 at Barnes & Noble Chelsea. (See "The Written Word" for details.) B.K.



Radio Highlights

New York & Company
Derek Bok, the president emeritus of Harvard, talks about his book, *The Trouble With Government,* and journalist Shelby Scates discusses his memoir, *War and Politics by Other Means.* Listeners can call in to show host Leonard Lopate. • 3/9, noon to 2 P.M. WNYC, 820 AM.

"Bookworm": Thomas Lynch
Host Michael Silverblatt debuts a weekly series of half-hour author interviews. This week, he talks to Thomas Lynch, the poet–funeral director and author of a forthcoming new book of essays, *Bodies in Motion and at Rest.* • 3/11, 4:30 to 5 P.M. WNYC, 820 AM.

"The Green Room"
On WFMU's science talk show, theoretical physicist Kurt Gottfried, professor emeritus at Cornell, discusses his role in forming the Union of Concerned Scientists. • 3/12, 7 to 8 P.M. WFMU, 91.1 FM.

Lectures and Panels

"Lost Chicago: Lessons for New York"
The author of the expanded edition of *Lost Chicago,* David Garrard Lowe gives a slide lecture on forgotten Chicago architecture and its parallels in New York, preceded by cocktails and a tour of this mid-nineteenth-century church. • 3/6 at 6 P.M. Church of the Incarnation, 209 Madison Ave., at 35th St. (212-995-5260); $12.

"Magic Prints"
For the last of Japan Society's "Techno Textiles" series on fashion and technology, British fashion designer Mark Eley and Japanese designer Wakako Kisihimoto explain innovative techniques that combine old-fashioned handicrafts and modern technology. • 3/6 at 6:30 P.M. Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155); $10.

"The Future of Marriage"
Erica Jong, Cokie and Steve Roberts, and Marilyn Yalom (a professor at Stanford's Institute for Women and Gender) participate in a panel discussion about the sacred institution. • 3/6 at 8 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); $20.

"Revisiting the Roosevelt Island Master Plan"
In conjunction with the Municipal Art Society's ongoing exhibition on the innovative public housing developed throughout the city by Ed Logue, a panel of speakers discusses the relevance of Logue's 1969 master plan for Roosevelt Island in light of new development. • 3/7 at 6:30 P.M. Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (212-935-3960); free.

"Living With the Enemy"
Photojournalist Donna Ferrato leads a slide presentation about domestic violence and discusses the topic with six administrators of organizations related to domestic violence. • 3/7 at 7 P.M. The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5353); free.

"In Praise of Neighborhood Shops"
Place Matters co-director Ned Kaufman moderates a panel discussion on the centrality of neighborhood stores to the cultural, economic, and aesthetic quality of life in the city. • 3/8 at 6 P.M. Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672); free with $7 admission.

"The Greatest Taboo"
Delroy Constantine-Simms, editor of *The Greatest Taboo,* a collection of essays about ethnicity and homosexuality, discusses how African-American gays and lesbians get along with others of their race. • 3/8 at 7 P.M. A Different Light, 151 W. 19th St. (212-989-4850); free.

Bridget Riley
The renowned painter signs copies of the catalogue for her current show at the Dia Center, "Reconnaissance." • 3/10, 2 to 3 P.M. The Bookshop at Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566); free.

Preservation Conference
The Historic Districts Council sponsors the seventh annual weekend conference on preservation in Brooklyn Heights. The opening reception on Friday is followed by a day of panels on practical methods of community action (PBS historian Barry Lewis delivers the keynote address) and, on Sunday, more than a dozen tours of historic Brooklyn neighborhoods. • Reception, 3/9 at 6 P.M. Grace Church Guild Hall, 254 Hicks St. Panels, 3/10, 8:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St. Tours, 3/11, 9:30 A.M. to 2 P.M. (212-614-9107 to register and for brochure); reception $10, conference $25, tours free–$25.

Frances Kiernan on Mary McCarthy
The author of the biography *Seeing May Plai* and the former *New Yorker* fiction editor discusses her subject in the latest installment o the series "Biographers and Brunch." • 3/11, 1 A.M. to 1 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexingto Ave. (212-415-5500); $26 including brunch.

"The Future of North American Jewry"
Allan Dershowitz, Anne Roiphe, Denni Prager, and Bronfman Center director Rabb David Woznica talk about issues like American-Jewish relations with Israel and the possibility o sustainable secular Judaism. The first in the three-par series, "Kallah," this talk is being simulcast via satellit to 31 Jewish community centers across North America. • 3/11 at 7:30 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexingto Ave. (212-415-5500); $25.

The Written Word

Nathaniel Mackey
The poet reads from his work and then talks to Davi Lehman about himself at the New School's Poetr Forum series. • 3/6 at 6:30 P.M. The New School., 66 12th St. (212-229-5611); free.

Patrick McCabe
McCabe reads from and signs copies of his latest novel, *Emerald Gems of Ireland.* • 3/6 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & N

ble, 4 Astor Pl. (212-420-1322); free.

Alan Furst
The novelist reads from his latest work, *Kingdom of Shadows,* and signs copies. • 3/6 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Robert Christgau and Nelson George
Christgau, the senior music critic at the *Village Voice,* reads from and discusses his latest book, *Grown Up All Wrong: 75 Great Rock and Pop Artists from Vaudeville to Techno.* George, the renowned hip-hop critic, reads from his most recent book, *Hip Hop America.* • 3/7 at 6:30 P.M. Housing Works Used Book Café, 126 Crosby St. (212-334-3324); free.

"Remember Me to Harlem"
Emily Bernard, the editor of this collection of letters between 1925 and 1964 from Langston Hughes and Carl Van Vechten—two key figures in the Harlem Renaissance—talks about her book. • 3/8 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 290 Baychester Ave., Bronx (718-862-3945); free.

John Searles
The first-time author reads from his critically acclaimed novel, *Boy Still Missing,* and signs copies. • 3/8 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 675 Sixth Ave., at 22nd St. (212-727-1227); free.

Katha Pollitt
Celebrating International Women's Day, Pollitt talks about her recently published collection of essays, *Subject to Debate,* culled from her column in *The Nation.* • 3/8 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. (212-420-1322); free.

Clayton Eshleman
The poet gives an extensive seminar on the topic of "Poet as Translator." • 3/10, 2 to 5 P.M. The Poetry Society of America, 15 Gramercy Park (212-254-9528); $50.

Karen Chase and Jessica Greenbaum
Chase reads from her first collection of poems, *Kazimierz Square,* Greenbaum from *Inventing Difficulty,* winner of the 1998 Gerald Cable Book Award. • 3/11 at 3 P.M. Posman Books, One University Pl. (212-533-2665); free.

Susan Howe and Eliot Weinberger
The two poets read from recent work as part of KGB's Monday-night poetry series. • 3/12 at 7:30 P.M. KGB Bar, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Richard Rayner
The British-born journalist and author of *Los Angeles Without a Map* reads from his epic historical novel, *The Cloud Sketcher,* and signs copies. • 3/13 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 675 Sixth Ave., at 22nd St. (212-727-1227); free.

Special Events

Tours

Marco Polo's Adventure
Joe Mauriello introduces another of his personally led food-themed New York City tours. This one winds through Chinatown and Little Italy, collecting dim sum, fresh pastries, pasta, and other goodies along the way while always avoiding the obvious tourist traps. • 3/11, 11 A.M. to around 3 P.M. (212-696-6666 for required reservations and meeting place); $75 includes cappuccino stop, dim sum, recipe sheets, and gratuities.

Greenwich Village Radical Walking Tour
The famous series of tours kicks off the spring season, focusing on subversive activities in the 1910s and the 1960s in the Village, from the fallout of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire to the Weather Underground and Stonewall. • 3/11 at 1 P.M. (call 718-492-0069 for reservations and meeting place); $10.

Marylin Monroe's Manhattan
It's more than just a drafty subway grate. See her old apartment; the site of the Stork Club, which Monroe and DiMaggio frequented; the Sutton Place building where *How to Marry a Millionaire* was filmed, and other key spots. • 3/11 at 2:30 P.M. Meet at the northeast corner of First Ave. and 57th St. (212-265-2663); $5.

Benefits

Architectural League's Beaux Arts Ball
The league celebrates the one hundredth anniversary of the Seagram Building with a ball on the theme of Seagram architect Mies van der Rohe's famous aphorism, "Less is more." Drinks, hors d'oeuvres, and dancing take place in the building's lobby. • 3/10, 9 P.M. to 1 A.M. Seagram Building, 375 Park Ave. (212-753-1722, advance purchase only); $125–$500.

Nothing Like a Dame 2001
This one-night-only show (by, for, and about women) benefits the Phyllis Newman Women's Health Initiative of the Actors' Fund of America. Participants include Lauren Bacall, Lynn Redgrave, Bebe Neuwirth, and many others. • 3/12 at 8 P.M. Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-221-7300, ext. 129); $40–$1,000.

Women's Campaign Fund Benefit
The citywide event, in which twenty influential citizens host celebrity chefs in their homes, benefits the Women's Campaign Fund in support of pro-choice female political candidates. Cicely Tyson emcees a predinners cocktail party. • 3/12 (Call 800-446-8170 for times, locations, and tickets, which are going fast); $350 for dinner.

Exhibits

"Operas and Fugues"
Custom-made art-case pianos (usually themed to an opera or other musical piece) were all the rage before the Depression hit. Architect and artist John Dieboll's colored-pencil drawings and limited-edition prints of these designs are exhibited here. • 3/6 through 3/17, 10 A.M. to 8 P.M. The Gallery at Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza (212-580-4673); free.

Floral Portraits by Tapp Francke
Francke's 25 or so vibrant photographs of flora may resemble O'Keeffe's, but they're photos made to resemble paintings, rather than vice versa. • 3/8 through 3/30. Horticultural Society of New York, 128 W. 58th St. (212-757-0915); free.

Other Events

International Art Expo
The twenty-third annual expo, one of the world's largest, features thousands of works by more than 2,400 artists, which this year includes Jane Seymour, Paul McCartney, and Prince Charles. • 3/10, 10 A.M. to 7 P.M.; 3/11, 11 A.M. to 6 P.M.; 3/11, 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. Jacob Javits Convention Center, Eleventh Ave. at 34th St. (888-322-5226); $15.

Sports

New Balance/National Scholastic Indoor Track and Field Championships
The Metropolitan Athletics Congress presents this meet, which brings together some of the best high-school-age athletes in the nation. Visit www.natl-

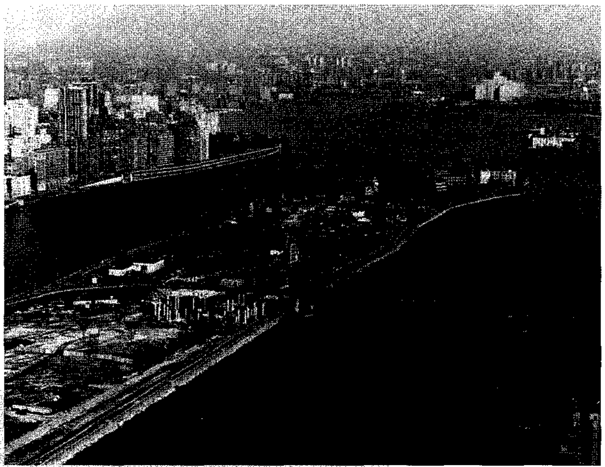
Game Week

HOME AWAY

	Mon: 3/5	Tue: 3/6	Wed: 3/7	Thu: 3/8	Fri: 3/9	Sat: 3/10	Sun: 3/11
KNICKS		IND MSG 8 P.M.	IND MSG 7 P.M.		NJ FSNY 7:30 P.M.		MIA NBC 12:30 P.M.
NETS	MIL FSNY 7:30 P.M.		PHI FSNY 7 P.M.		NY FSNY 7:30 P.M.	WAS FSNY 7 P.M.	
RANGERS	NYI MSG 7 P.M.				WAS MSG 7 P.M.	OTT MSG 7 P.M.	
ISLANDERS	NYR MSG 7 P.M.	WAS FSNY 7:30 P.M.			MIN METRO 7:30 P.M.	FLA FSNY 1 P.M.	
DEVILS		OTT METRO 7:30 P.M.		MIN FSNY 7:30 P.M.		PHI ABC 3 P.M.	
HITMEN							SF TNN 4 P.M.

Happening

Fantasy Island



New York City has no shortage of failed Utopias, and half-developed Roosevelt Island tops the list. In the late sixties, the city planner Ed Logue commissioned John Burgee and Philip Johnson to design a master plan for the no-man's-land then known as Welfare Island (pictured, before development). There was to be a Northtown (finally finished in 1989), a Southtown (never built), and acres of parkland, a tranquil haven for 20,000 residents of carefully mixed income. As developers prepare to break ground on a revamped Southtown unfaithful to the master plan—and many of the island's 8,500 residents cry gentrification—the Municipal Art Society hosts **Revisiting the Roosevelt Island Master Plan,** a panel discussion on the relevance of Logue's original vision. The talk, on March 7, includes City Council member A. Gifford Miller, historian Thomas Mellins, city planning commissioner Alexander Garvin, and other key players—and promises to be part history lesson, part cranky town-hall meeting. (See "Lectures and Panels" for details.)

hotograph courtesy of the Empire State Development Archive.

BERMAN *Continued from page 107*

pected for Christmas dinner at a friend's mother's house. Susie Harmon, her chum since boarding school at Chadwick (where schoolmates included Jann Wenner and Liza Minnelli), lived in Arizona, but Susan joined her every Christmas night at her mother's in Los Angeles. This year, she was bringing Nyle Brenner with her.

When she didn't answer her phone all day, her friends panicked. Nyle drove to the house. By this point, the police had already removed the body; they had also locked the house up. Later, Nyle would tell friends that when no one answered the door, he crawled in through a back window.

Nyle apparently gave different accounts of what happened next to different people. He told some that he knew something was wrong when he saw "black dirt" all over the house (fingerprinting dust left by the police). He told others he looked through the house and "nothing was amiss" (did he miss the hair and blood?). "What struck me as odd," says one friend, "was that he told me that he walked out the front door, went to the neighbors, and said, 'Is anything wrong next door?' They said they were sorry to tell him that the woman next door had died. Nyle told me, 'Well, of course my heart broke. But I realized she was clumsy, she could have fallen down. And I got back in the car and drove to Susie's.' "

Most of Susan's friends got word of her death from Nyle, who left urgent messages on their machines. When they called him back, he told them what had happened, that Susan was dead and had been murdered "execution-style." When Sareb got the news, he flew back from Amsterdam. Nyle met him at the airport and spent the ride home telling him how difficult his mother was.

Things got stranger at the memorial service Sareb arranged for Susan in early February. He held it at the Writers Guild and banned members of the press who weren't friends of Susan's because he wanted Bobby Durst to be able to attend without being harassed by the media. (Durst didn't show.)

Sareb asked nine people to speak about Susan, and the stories they told were beautiful, funny, and touching. But this was a group filled with writers—mystery writers, screenwriters, journalists—and so, before and after the service, as cocktails were served, they couldn't help but ask the one question on all their minds: "Who did this?"

This was the night that several people had what they later described as unsettling conversations with Nyle Brenner. "At least I won't have someone calling me three times a day," he said to one attendee. "She sucked me dry," he told another. But there has also been much discussion among her friends about what Susan really knew about Bobby and Kathie Durst. One told *New York* that many years ago, Susan revealed that "she'd provided Bobby's alibi"—while insisting it did not mean she thought he was guilty.

THE COPS HAVE THE HARD DRIVE to her precious computer, and sources say it is rich with clues. Her Rolodex—reputed to contain over 1,000 numbers—is also being pored over by investigators. *New York* has learned that the police have also obtained Nyle Brenner's files. No gun has been found. But a bullet casing found at the scene—and reported to have been from a small-caliber gun—gives investigators a shred of hope. It is widely theorized that whoever killed her was someone Susan knew—or a professional hired by someone Susan knew—whom she trusted enough to let into her home, or who knew enough about her to get into her home. Susan, with all her fears and neuroses, would *never* have let a stranger in.

The LAPD is keeping a tight lid on details about the case. And friends say privately they fear it may never be solved. Or worse: "that it will," as one puts it, "and it will be one of us." Bobby Durst is included in that category. And for that reason alone, many of her friends—though fully aware of "the coincidence," as they refer to Jeanine Pirro's plan to interview Susan—just don't buy the Durst theory. Susan lived by a mob-like code of loyalty. She would never, no matter how desperate, rat out a friend, even if she *did* know something incriminating. ("If she could compartmentalize Davie the Jew," one friend noted, "she could compartmentalize Bobby Durst.") The answer to the question "Who shot Susan Berman?" may well prove to be, "None of the above." As Liz Rosenberg puts it, "She could have pissed off a total stranger."

ON JANUARY 2, SUSAN WAS LAID TO REST IN a huge mausoleum at the Home of Peace cemetery in Los Angeles. She was dressed in a long black velvet dress with white trim that had belonged to Sareb and Mella's grandmother and was placed in a vault next to her parents and Uncle Chickie. "Fortunately, it is on the second level," says Kim Lankford. "And there's nobody on the other side to annoy her." Together, some of her friends sang "The Sunny Side of the Street," and had her favorite photos placed in her casket. "We put all her favorite people in there," says Kim. "Couldn't fit everybody in." ■

scholasticchamp.org for schedule or more information. • 3/9 from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M.; 3/10 from 8:30 A.M to 7 P.M.; 3/11 from 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M. (212-227-0071).

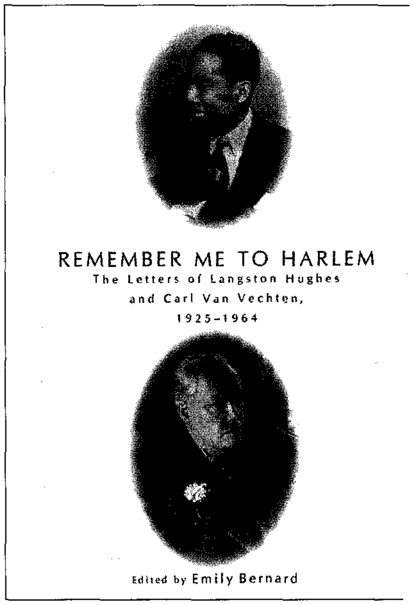
Brooklyn Half-Marathon

The New York Road Runners Club hosts the first half-marathon of the five-borough series. Starts at the Coney Island boardwalk at W. 5th St., ends in Prospect Park on Hill Drive. Nonmembers $17; limited race-day entries $22. Visit www.nyrrc.org for registration. • 3/10 at 8 A.M. (212-860-4455).

Reading

Renaissance Men

Budding poet Langston Hughes met middle-aged critic Carl Van Vechten at a Harlem party in 1924, two years before Van Vechten's controversial *Nigger Heaven* made him a symbol, for many, of white exploitation of black culture. Within a year of their meeting, the two began a correspondence that lasted for four decades, much of it collected in Emily Bernard's new **Remember Me to Harlem: The Letters of Langston Hughes and Carl Van Vechten, 1925–1964.** Bernard ably introduces and annotates what amounts not only to a record of the lives of two key figures in the Harlem Renaissance but also to a relationship (platonic, Bernard presumes) between strange bedfellows—a wealthy white midwestern aesthete and a fiery, political, and supremely talented black poet. Bernard comes to the Bronx on March 8 to discuss her work at Barnes & Noble. (See "The Written Word" for details.)



REMEMBER ME TO HARLEM
The Letters of Langston Hughes
and Carl Van Vechten,
1925–1964

Edited by Emily Bernard

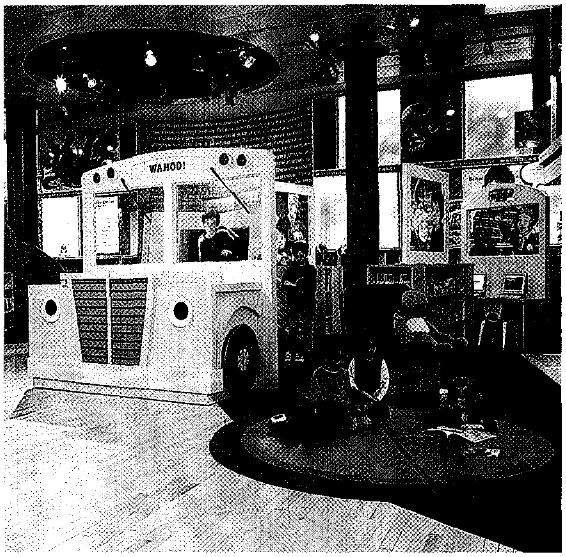
cue Kids

Edited by Susan Avery

Opening

Judging a Bookstore by Its Cover

Dick Robinson talks a lot about the "Scholastic experience," and my first instinct is to dismiss the CEO's airy theory about his 80-year-old educational-publishing company. But then, for a few moments, I can no longer hear what he's saying. In my mind, I'm back in Mrs. Bumas's first-grade class, circa 1966, oohing over the latest issue of the *News Pilot* and its cover story on Expo 67. I remember the annual P.S. 175 book fair, where my abundant purchases tested the strength of that red rubber strap with the silver metal clasps. I then fast-forward to my daughter's Scholastic Book Fair last year and how she talked for days about its impending arrival. When the fair finally came, she retreated to a corner of the scuffed gymnasium floor with a pile of books, deciding between the "need-its" and the "next times." Okay, Mr. Robinson, I'm back now. At the new **Scholastic Store** in SoHo, the company's first such endeavor, I see that "experience" come to life: Heads do 180's to take in a Quidditch-playing Harry Potter greeting the masses. Two pre-schoolers are gaga over Clifford's Corner, where the Big Red Dog hovers high above the shelving. The Magic School Bus, situated at the heart of the store, beckons young visitors to take a turn at the steering wheel and working instrument panel. In the upstairs Loft, tweens seated at computer stations scan their way through Scholastic Internet links. Grown-up visitors are checking out the Red Bar, a resource center for parents and teachers. One city mom, who showed up during the preview before Christmas, was struck by how few books are here: The store is selling only its own brand. But somehow, it's okay: No sensory overload, just plenty of scurrying-about space for kids who read on the run. "They may not remember the name of one book," observes Robinson, "but they'll identify Scholastic with acquiring things they love to read." He could write a book about it. S.A.



Children's Events

Doing It by the Book
This week marks the grand opening of the first Scholastic Store, located in SoHo. Readings of *Clifford, The Big Red Dog* are on tap, along with an in-store paade and other activities. On March 12, the store pulls he invisibility cloak off two Harry Potter books, previously available only in the U.K.: *Quidditch Through the Ages* and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. • 57 Broadway; Mon.-Sat. 10 A.M.-8 P.M., Sun. noon-6 P.M. 212-343-6166).

Book 'Em at the United Nations
One cannot be counted among the true New York–parent sophisticates until he or she attends the annual Children's International Book, Crafts and Food air. Thousands of titles for kids from nursery through middle school are for sale, with many in foreign lanuages. The day also includes such worldly activities as Indian henna painting, origami, and Native American craft-making. Parents will love the White Elephant sale and authentic international food court. A professional magician performs and school kids participate in public readings and an adorable talent show. • 3/10 from 11 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.; United Nations International School, at FDR Drive and 25th St. (212-684-7400); admission is $4, kids are free. Activities and food are priced separately.

Entry-Level Jazz
The Billy Taylor Trio comes to Long Island for a one-hour performance that teaches kids, and confused adults, what jazz is. • 3/10 at 2 P.M.; Tilles Center for the Performing Arts at the C.W. Post Campus, Rte. 25A, Brookville (516-299-3100); $18.

Meet the Maestro
Every child becomes a conductor at the Little Orchestra Society while learning the magic language of the baton from Mr. Maestro. • 3/10-3/11; French Institute Alliance Francaise, Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-971-9500); $35.

Puppets and Pop-ups
Paul Peabody and his Old-Fashioned Marionette Theatre introduce you to garden creatures Mr. Toad and Mr. Mole of *The Wind in the Willows* as they dance and exercise to Mozart. The accompanying family art project includes a survey of animal habitats and a class on creating your own pop-up model or booklet of creatures in their home territories. • 3/10; Wave Hill, 675 W. 252nd St. in the Bronx (718-549-3200); 2 P.M. and 3:30 P.M.; pop-up program from 1 to 4 P.M.; free.

Bang-up Time
Celebrated Senegalese master percussionist Mor Thiam leads the Royal Drummers of Africa, an ensemble of drummers from Dakar. A project in conjunction with the Caribbean Cultural Center. • 3/10 at 2 P.M.; Aaron Davis Hall, W. 135th St. and Convent Ave. (212-650-7148); $10, $5 kids 11 and younger.

34th Street Art School
"When I was a child, I could draw like Raphael, but it took me many years to learn how to draw like a child," Picasso was known to have said. At this year's International Artexpo at the Jacob Javits Convention Center, kids can participate in a professionally led, hands-on art program and take home souvenir art projects, such as drawings, collages, and hand puppets. The expo is filled with pieces by more than 2,000 artists, both known and newcomers. • Artexpo runs from 3/8 through 3/12, with the kids' classes on 3/10-3/11 from noon to 4 P.M.; W. 34th St. and Eleventh Ave. (888-322-5226); $15, free for kids 12 and younger.

Laurie Berkner in Concert
Catch the famous kids recording artist while she's hot.• 3/11 at 11 A.M.; Ansche Chesed Synagogue, 251 W. 100th St. (212-866-4993); $12.

Masticating in the Garden
Gum-chewing, the best annoyance a kid can muster without being punished, will be encouraged at the New York Botanical Garden's Tropical Treasures program. Youngsters can blow their own designer versions of Bazooka bubbles using latex from the sapodilla tree. African and Caribbean arts-and-crafts sessions as well. • Through 3/18; Everett Children's Adventure Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., the Bronx (718-817-8700); Garden Passport $7, $4.50 students and seniors, $2 kids 2-12.

Circus in the Nursing Home
"Circus" is a new puppet-people show about an 83-year-old former ringmaster and his grandson who decide that Grandpa's retirement home needs some entertainment. But the home has some very strict rules—and then there's that horribly nasty nurse. • Through 3/18; the New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200); $10-$20.

Psycho-Babbling
Use your head and find out the secrets of the mind. The New York Hall of Science opens a new exhibit, "Psychology: It's More Than You Think," that shows kids how the brain develops, explores emotions, tests memory, and uncovers the weaknesses of human observation. • Through 4/29; Flushing Meadows Corona Park, 47-01 111th St., Queens (718-699-0005); $7.50, $5 seniors and kids 4-17.

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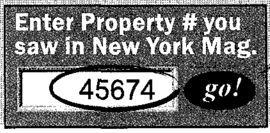
garage, pets OK, Financing 75%

2. Log onto www.nymag.mlx.com and type in the Property ID. Click on the Go! button on the right.



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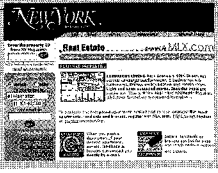

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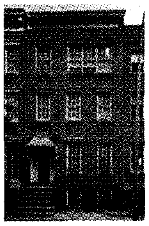

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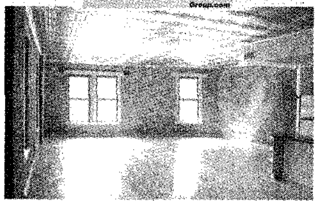

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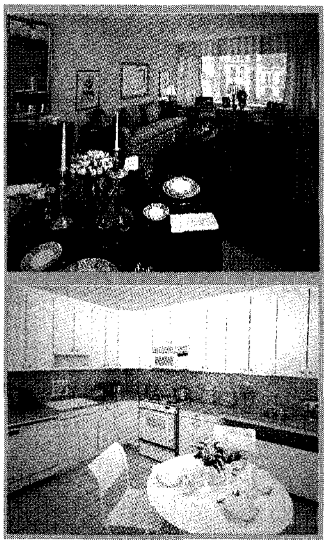

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LaLa Wang is CEO of New York City based MLX.com, a residential real estate community and technology company connecting consumers and professionals. For more expert advice or to ask a question, email LaLa at asklala@mlx.com

Best Broker of The Week

Marilyn Korn

Founder of her own firm, Marilyn Korn Real Estate, Marilyn has been involved in Real Estate for over 25 years. Having taken the luxury cooperative at 10 West 66th Street through the conversion process 20 years ago, Marilyn Korn has knowledge of this industry inside out.

Marilyn Korn Real Estate is a boutique-type company specializing in the listing, selling and renting of apartments on the West Side, particularly in the Lincoln Center Area, where their office is located.

Marilyn is known for professional, friendly, and attentive service to all customers, whether they are renting a studio apartment or buying an upscale home in the millions. She and her sales associates often work with referrals from customers who have been pleasantly surprised by the "Marilyn Korn" style. Helping not selling, educating not pushing, she is always willing to point out the negatives as well as the positives of a proposed property. Marilyn's reputation for ethical practices is well known throughout the industry. Whether you're selling or buying, you have a friend in the business!

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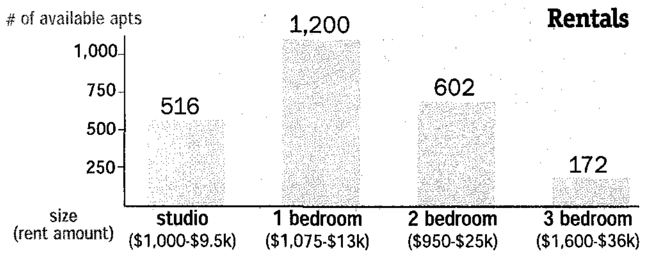
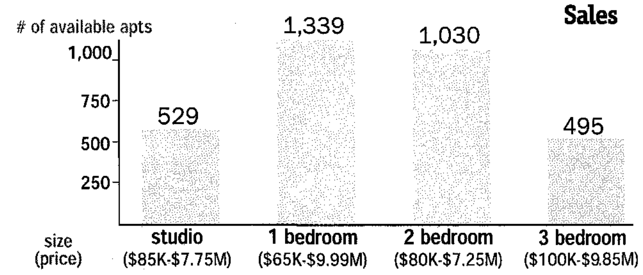
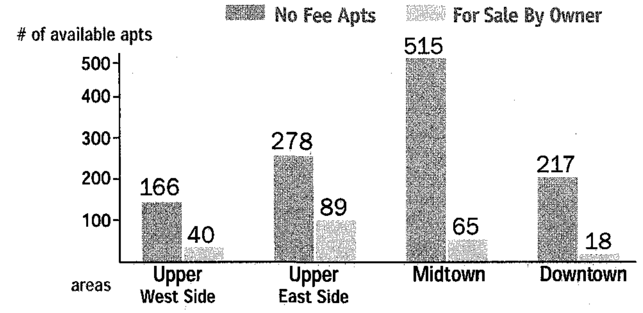
MLX Market Watch







Top 5 Brokerages by Current Aggregate Sales Exclusives*

Company Names	Sales Exclusives
1. Douglas Elliman	$773,170,500
2. Corcoran	$761,604,500
3. Hallstead Property Co.	$112,617,646
4. Bellmarc Realty	$81,630,400
5. I.T. Properties	$70,200,000

*as based upon listings provided to MLX database

Date: As of February 27, 2001. Source: MLX.c

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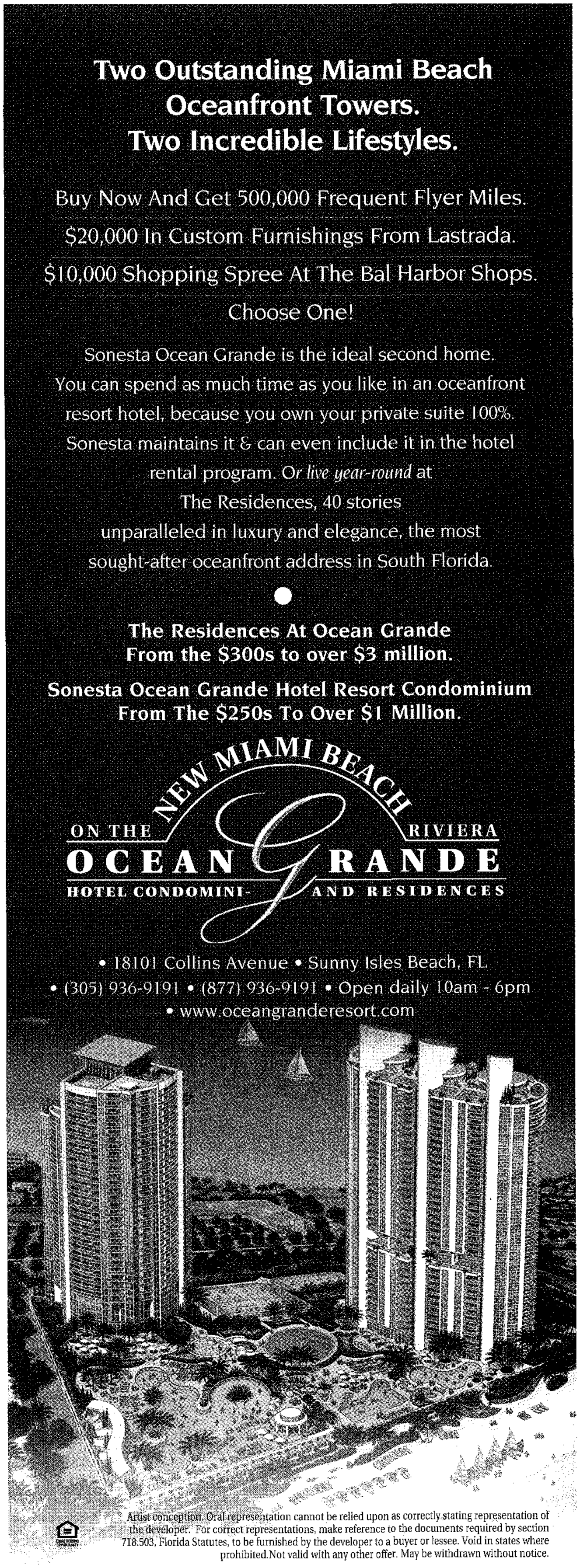

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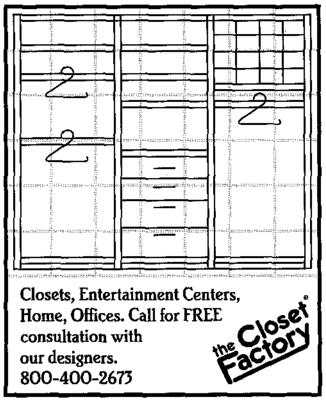

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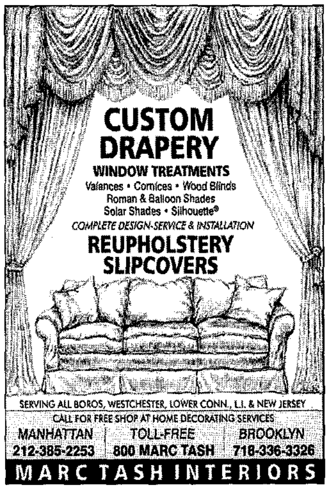

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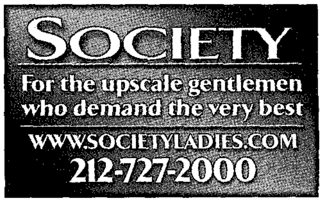
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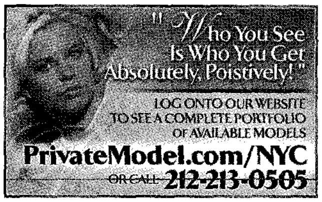

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Red Hair, Large Hazel Eyes—Pretty, slim, sexy, athletic, intelligent, adventurous, caring, expressive, successful. Loves the arts, nature, hiking, biking, travel. Seeks intelligent, sexy, attractive, adventurous, warm, kind, successful guy, 48 years-mid 60s. Note/photo. 7185 ✉

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Big Smile, Big Heart—Handsome, stylish, successful, 53-year-old entrepreneur looking for beautiful, warm, giving, sensuous, funny woman. Photo and phone, please. 7189 ✉

Sensually Cerebral, Genuinely—Handsome, warmly irreverent, Jewish physician, 41 - prefer Venice to Boca, theater - regularly, movies - Lawrence of Arabia/Annie Hall, basketball - no contract offers lately, the beach - Hamptons without the Hamptons. Seek to share life with a truly smart, pretty, witty, authentic woman, 28-38. Photo, please. 7202 ✉☎

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Woman Of Substance, Suddenly Single—Strikingly pretty, thin blond, elegant and cultured yet loves the outdoors and dancing, Jewish, lives in Great Neck, financially secure but unpretentious. Seeks to meet kind, attractive, educated gentleman, 55-65, to share meaningful life. Photo. 7178✉

Tall, Attractive, Youthful 50s Male—Professional, nonsmoker, successful, unencumbered, seeks bright, sincere, accomplished woman, 40s-50s, with spirit and sense of humor. Photo/note. 7181 ✉

Japanese Lady—46, seeks white male. Music, theater. Photo and note. 7198 ✉☎

Sexy, Curvy, 50s—Want that special guy, 57-65, business/professional. 7190 ✉☎

Sophisticated Asian Gem—MD with a sweet heart; creative cook; artistic; Paris-born; loves life. Seeks worldly, high energy, successful, kind man, 36-48, for life, kids. 7187 ✉☎

Seeking Gentleman—Who is well-groomed, fit and financially secure. Divorcee, 53, who misses laughing with a man, enjoys Pomerol in NYC, Boston, Paris and Kathmandu. Key words are: Nepal, hiking, family, humor, France, friends, trust, music, today. Photo/note. 7211 ✉

Beauty, Brains And Irreverent Blond—Petite (size two, 105 lbs), leggy, accomplished and athletic Jewish attorne with a mischievous, outgoing, bubbl and gregarious personality, seeks JD/MD, CEO or highly accomplished, cerebra and motivated man (from 39 to 53), wh loves to laugh, to dance, to stay in, t go out and to do everything else. If yo don't like short skirts, thin legs an black high heels, don't respond. Recent photo, please, and note...to marilynnnmonroe@aol.com 7200 ✉

Pretty, Lovely Lady—48, Jewish, 5'2' slim, auburn hair, big blue eyes - wishes t meet attractive, slim man with a sense c humor, for a happy relationship. 7180 ✉

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What A Great Night!

Thanks to the 800 people who came to the Copacabana on Valentines Day to celebrate romance and the wonderful possibilities that are there for everyone. It was an especially terrific night for the Strictly Personals staff. Sure, the weather forecast called for rain all day. It was a beautiful clear but cold evening. People seems quite happy that night. It was an especially good hair night. Oh, what could have been if the rain and humidity had prevailed. But that's not what made the evening so joyous for us. It was the wonderful story of Claire and Michael. It all started in 1998. Claire happens to be a friend of mine. She is a great catch. I won't reveal her age, but she has 3 grown children, so you can probably take a pretty good educated guess. I told her about our Valentine's party and insisted that she attend. I know how wonderful the possibilities are because my staff and I have been hosting these parties for many years. Claire balked. She wasn't so sure our party was right for her. After hearing every excuse in the book, I sold her on the party, but it took every sales technique that I knew to "close the deal." Sure enough, Claire arrived with a small support group and into the Copa she went. Two hours later I spotted her dancing with a very handsome man. His name was Michael. Let me cut right to our February 15th, 2001 Valentine's party at the Copa. Clarie and Michael showed up to celebrate their good fortune. Michael took Claire to the very spot that they met and put the most beautiful engagement ring on her finger. That's what makes my work so wonderful. It's all about the possibilities and hope. I have seen people meet, seen friendships develop and I have seen people just have a fun evening with friends. You never know what's going to happen at a Strictly Personals party. All our staff asks is that you open yourself to the possibilities. Watch for more parties in upcoming months.

And congratulations to Claire and Michael.

Nancy J Fedder and staff
Strictly Personals at New York Magazine

Class Act Seeks Class Act—Successful, easygoing professional guy, a young 55, seeks bright, caring, affectionate, youthful-looking female counterpart, 40-50, who enjoys movies, concerts, travel and romancing. Photo/note, please. 7193 ✉☎

Beauty And Brains—Kind, caring, sexy, smart, educated professional female, mid 30s, blond/hazel, 5'5", shapely 108, seeking attractive, successful professional, single/divorced white male, 5'10" plus, healthy, fit, with good heart, great mind and kind soul. Note/photo. 7204 ✉

European-Born Lady—Would like to make the acquaintance of a gentleman in his 60s - who will form his own opinion of the writer of this note. 7192 ✉

Irish-Catholic Female—Attractive, 42, blue eyes, brown wavy hair, big heart, professional, seeks soul mate. 7203 ✉

Long Island Guy—Good-looking, successful businessman, 49, seeks very pretty, slim, tall, intelligent woman, 38-47, for good times and possible long-term relationship. Note/photo a must. 7197 ✉☎

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Exec Seeks Lifetime Lady—Attractive, funny, educated, successful, youthful 50s, world traveler with many interests - a nice Jewish guy with lots of energy and good values. All I need is a bright, attractive, happy lady to share everything with. Note/photo. 7194 ✉

Curvaceous And Vivacious—Beautiful blond, slim, sexy, well-exercised Manhattanite...with a head for business, a zest for life, a heart of gold. If you, too, are a special successful someone, 45-60, who loves to laugh, dream and play, please take the time to say hello. A sexy mind a plus. Photo/phone. 7179✉☎

Stunning, Statuesque, Smart—28, 5'9", seeks maturely stable male to settle with someone special. Photo essential. 7196✉☎

Tall, Blonde And Handsome—Gay man, 32, 6'2", smart, funny, and outgoing with a great family and terrific friends. I travel extensively (business and pleasure), Love the sun and the beach, eating out around NY, and exploring other cities and cultures. I'm looking for a man who is kind, warm, smart, open, and funny; someone who is fun to go out with and eventually might be nice to come home to. 7216 ✉

Feminine, Tall, Curvaceous—Spirited Manhattanite dreams of a dynamic, intelligent man, 48-60. 7199 ✉

Femme Fatale—Seeks dynamic Jewish man, 60 plus, to love. 7191 ✉

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Handsome, Articulate, Funny, Smart—Quintessential New Yorker, 34, loves travel, family, sports, NYC restaurants, exploring the city (days and nights), and long rambling conversations. Seeks kind, funny, smart, upbeat, outgoing, energetic woman for fun and romance... long term a distinct possibility for the right woman. Yankees fan a plus, Rangers fan a big plus! 7214✉☎

Catholic Physician—43 years old, with many good qualities: funny, upbeat, honest... Hoping to find a Catholic female for love and marriage. 7205✉☎

Add Some Spice To Your Life—Striking brunette, single white female, mid 30s, 5'4", seeks tall (5'10" plus), witty (British humor), single white male, 31-42, professional. Note and photo please. 7167✉☎

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Single Jewish Male—53, owner of a major kosher food company. Seeking mate who is beautiful both inside and out, appreciates the finer things in life, travel, sporting events, theater and quiet evenings at home. I'm 5'11", 195 lbs. Most people say that I'm not bad to look at. Photo and note. melvis144@aol.com. 7207✉

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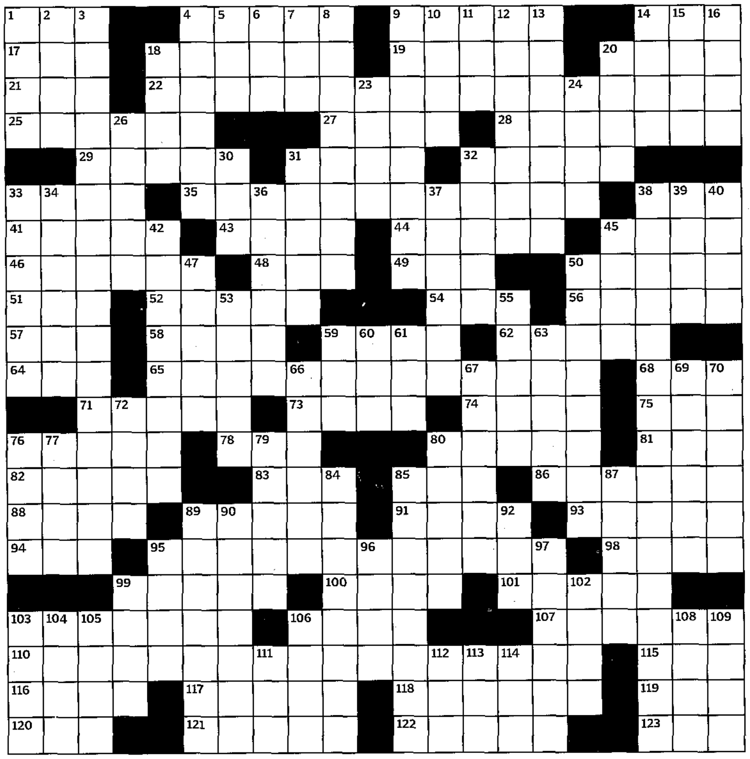
'Sayings of a Sort'

'Cue' Crossword by Maura B. Jacobson



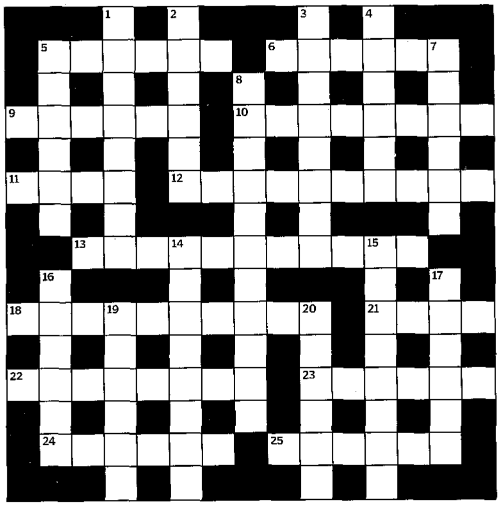
ACROSS

1 Alphabet finale, British style
4 "To —— human"
9 Golf-course hazards
14 N.C.O. rank
17 WW II combat arena
18 Garb with jeans
19 Calcutta coin
20 Butter look-alike
21 University of Michigan city, with 76-Across
22 A balanced diet consists of ——
25 Rather tardy
27 Rugged rock projection
28 Used an imprinting device
29 Ford flop
31 Related
32 Smoke-stained, as a chimney
33 De —— (posh)
35 Never squat if you are ——
38 Sis's sibling
41 Oscar-awards gp.
43 Portent
44 Ballerinas' practice
45 Do up a gift
46 Competes in a bee
48 Panhandlers do it
49 It's always in poetry
50 Crownlike headdress
51 Thus
52 Rental vehicle for self-movers
54 Neptune's realm
56 Eero Saarinen's father
57 Luncheon leftover
58 Toothpaste types
59 Fish inducement
62 Strut one's stuff
64 Six, in Siena
65 A closed mouth ——
68 Address abbrs.
71 "—— well it were done quickly": Macbeth
73 Hammock quickies
74 '90s teen party
75 Between Ho and Minh
76 See 21-Across
78 Sinbad's bird
80 One acting as decoy
81 Auxiliary verb
82 Chicago gridders
83 Opposite of neg.
85 Tailor's concern
86 Loewe's collaborator
88 Be in want of
89 Mild cigar
91 Not fooled by
93 Put on hold
94 B.P.O.E. member
95 I shop, ——
98 Space org. acronym
99 Direct with the forefinger
100 "Untouchables" Feds
101 Addition result
103 Identification label
106 Warm-up exam for coll.
107 Helmsman's handle
110 Do not be irreplaceable, because ——
115 Hurray, to José
116 Windups
117 "The Mill on ——" (Bacchelli novel)
118 Like the rose, in a Wordsworth ode
119 Actress Thurman
120 Kennedy nickname
121 Small land mass
122 Campus bigwigs
123 The piper's son

DOWN

1 Eager enthusiasm
2 Sicilian volcano
3 Always borrow money from pessimists; they ——
4 Abstain from
5 Before sigma
6 Former Braz. capital
7 Annoy
8 Adhering
9 Mysterious Bermuda area
10 Ladder step
11 Zoo swinger
12 Slang for a dense fog
13 Districts
14 Prelude to a duel
15 Heredity factor
16 Taylor's third husband
18 Soviet news agency
20 "Do Not Forsake Me, —— Darlin' " ("High Noon" song)
23 Brockovich played by Julia, 2000
24 Millinery
26 Standard of perfection
30 Name of thirteen popes
31 In a spin
32 Fifth tire
33 Rodeo ropes
34 Referee's colleague
36 Attack from hiding
37 Takes care of
38 If you are too open-minded, your ——
39 Steak order
40 October birthstone
42 Hard hitters
45 Coquettish artifice
47 Shave a sheep
50 Wobbled precariously
53 Make modifications
55 "A partridge in —— tree"
59 Bikini part
60 Egyptian cobra
61 Entrance signs
63 Make merry
66 "Again, please!"
67 Tutti's go-with
69 Deuce toppers
70 African land, with "Leone"
72 Ply one's trade
76 Equal to the task
77 The McCoy
79 Mod painting genre
80 Flax product
84 Vulnerable place
85 Predicted
87 Pertaining to the kidneys
89 Trattoria vino
90 Widths' counterparts
92 Morsel for Dobbin
95 In —— (entirely)
96 Julie's "Zhivago" co-star
97 Drive-in lodgings
99 Church furnishings
102 In neat order
103 Russian refusal
104 Top-notch
105 TV newscaster Roger
106 Le Moko or Le Pew
108 Sailor's saint
109 Paper quantity
111 Word with canto
112 One of the Stooges
113 Eggs
114 Half a score

The 'Guardian' Crossword Set by Araucaria



ACROSS

5 Constitution whose state is 11. (6)
6 One who's crazy about the underworld would always be 11. (6)
9 Cockney 3rd with scale, not 11? (6)
10 Time to celebrate, with suit if 11. (8)
11 Exposed the field to energy. (4)
12 Singer to win the lady: here are the 11. (10)
13 Wrong date? Give us a job, say, backed by the people. (11)
18 Almost complete lack of discrimination with craving for the 11. (3,1,6)
21 Bird of the wilderness. (4)
22 Norman, a stag with a girl, was of no interest to the 6. (8)
23 Punishment for nothing. Jolly good! (6)
24 Go 11 with luck? (6)
25 11's relation cut short by commercial. (6)

DOWN

1 11 takes a shiner to the Queen among kings. (8)
2 Top class with sun not shining, say. (5,1)
3 Exposed, on the one hand, without qualification. (8)
4 Up to date intelligence success. (4,2)
5 Nervous wrecks rule North America. (6)
7 Puzzle with strip to become 11. (6)
8 Fix bayonets 'til exhibiting pig-headedness? (11)
14 11 at home threw a wobbly. (2,3,3)
15 Gore inside of wounded solver, certainly unnecessary for the 11. (8)
16 Artist's model around—no progress here! (6)
17 Wound from second 11. (6)
19 What the 11 lack is making a model weary. (6)
20 Crone, absorbing victory, may be humming too. (6)

Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 87.

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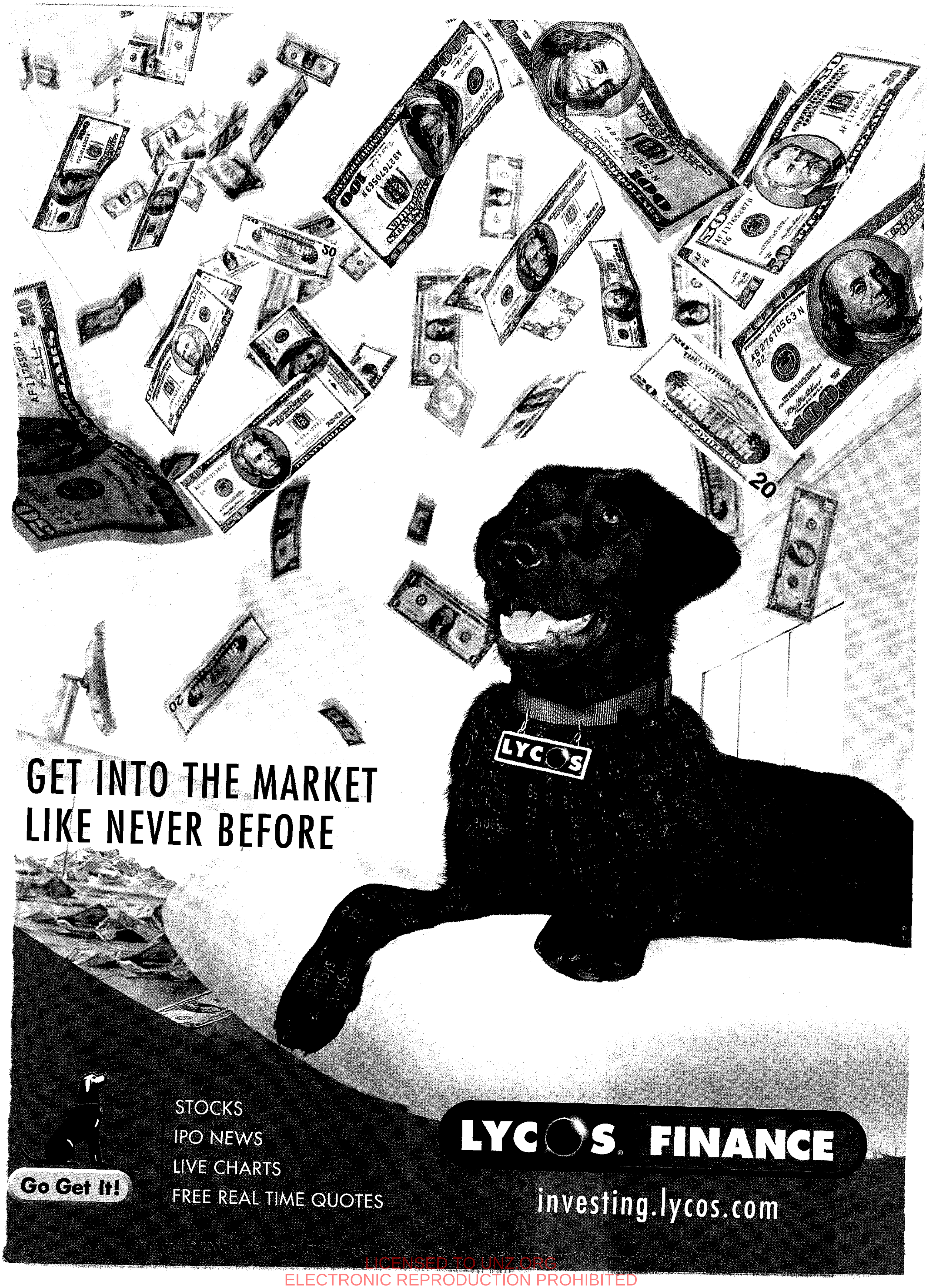

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